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Women of Valour
Professional Women in South African
Pentecostal Churches

by

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Abbreviations

AA	-	Affirmative Action
AIC	-	African Independent Churches
ANC	-	African National Congress
ATR	-	African Traditional Religions
BEE	-	Black Economic Empowerment
COSATU	-	Congress of South African Trade Unions
D	-	Divorced
GB	-	Grace Bible Church
HP	-	His People
IFP	-	Inkatha Freedom Party
M	-	Married
NYPD	-	New York Police Department
PCC	-	Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches
PEC	-	Pentecostal-Evangelical Churches
S	-	Single
TRC	-	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCT	-	University of Cape Town
UJ	-	University of Johannesburg
Wits	-	University of the Witwatersrand

Glossary

amaZulu	-	the prefix ‘ama’ is the correct isiZulu way of referring to a group of ‘Zulu’ people
isiSotho	-	‘isi’ is the correct prefix to put before ‘Sotho’ to denote it as an object like language.
isiZulu	-	‘isi’ is the correct prefix to put before ‘Zulu’ to denote it as an object like language.
lobola	-	bride price
muti	-	herbal medicine
Ndebele	-	one of the tribes in South Africa that have distinct Geometric designs
nganga	-	herbal healer
poquana	-	African traditional blessing of a baby
sangoma	-	a herbal healer and spiritual diviner
shebeen	-	a drinking house in the township
ubuntu	-	community living
umsebenzi	-	ritual family gathering

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Abstract

Rapid social change has become a hallmark of post-apartheid South Africa and part of this process has been the expansion of a middle class amongst previously disadvantaged people. My thesis contributes to our understanding of this upward mobility by investigating the role of two Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian churches in helping young, professional, previously disadvantaged women (re)shape their identities and negotiate the various networks of social, economic and political power they encounter as they strive towards socio-economic advancement.

The thesis details His People and Grace Bible church and gives an explanation of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in South Africa. In contrast to Latin American studies it is argued that within both churches there was a masculinization, rather than feminization of Christianity, which was attractive to men and women. Using some of Bourdieu's ideas I have tried to show that a central contribution these churches make in the lives of some of their members is to help them develop various social and cultural capital resources, which they felt they lacked. Through their engagement with these churches women (re)shaped their identities seeing themselves as having a life purpose and the potential to realise it. Their identities as mothers, wives and single women were impacted by the ideal of the nuclear family and wifely submission upheld in both churches and which the women in this study tried to fulfil. By aligning themselves with this ideal women found their faith legitimated distancing themselves from their extended families and the various demands of African cultural practices. Both churches strove to establish a sanitised, modern, African Christianity, which promoted individuality and socio-economic success, and offered an alternative to the hedonistic trends of popular Y culture.

Chapter 1

Introduction

A new beginning

The day was clear with a cobalt sky, and the red-gold autumn leaves shimmered in the morning light, as if nature itself was celebrating the enormity of the day. I left home early to go and vote; standing with the millions of South Africans in the 1994, first free democratic elections. We knew we were making history; there was an air of exuberance, promise and hope – we were changing our selves and our nation. We stood men and women, black and white, old and young, united in bringing to life our new country. Bishop Tutu declared us the ‘Rainbow Nation’ and we spoke of ourselves as the ‘New South Africa’. It was on this day that the political revolution came to maturity but few of us standing there were aware of the economic, social and cultural revolutions that were still to be negotiated. This thesis is focused on the impact of the socio-cultural changes that have followed the political revolution in the lives of professional women who were members of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian churches. It is therefore about religion, society and economics, in the broad Bourdieusian sense, in the making of the New South Africa. Apartheid was a political hegemony that held the country; it dictated the very fabric of our social, cultural, economic and ideological structures. It shaped the identities we created either within or against it. The death of apartheid gave space for the birth of a new imagined community (Anderson 1983), which South Africans have tried to shape in the years since 1994.



Figure 1.1 Map of South Africa.



Figure 1.2 A map of Gauteng Province.

The majority of fieldwork for this study was done in 2004, ten years after the first democratic elections, and was concentrated on the experiences of 43 young professional women who were members of two Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian (PCC) churches in Johannesburg and Soweto. My central question was to ask whether these two churches helped the members I interviewed to negotiate the various networks of power¹ they encountered as they tried to establish themselves as successful career women in the New South Africa. I defined 'professional' not in the classical sense in which it has been used in sociology but more in keeping with the connotations the women I met were using. This modification of the term had to be made because I could only find a handful of women at Grace Bible church who fitted the narrow classical criteria of 'professional'. Three key elements defined a woman as being 'professional'; 1) she had to have undertaken tertiary level education, 2) she had to have authority over other people and be in a position to make independent decisions in her job, 3) she had to have firm expectations of a career trajectory and have begun to realise some of these. Within this broad taxonomy there were three categories of career women; 1) those who were professional in the classical sense of the word with certification relevant to their work such as lawyers, bankers and financial analysts, 2) entrepreneurs, 3) other employees.

Finding that these churches did support these women, this led to a second question namely – how did these churches facilitate this process? In order to supplement the information that I needed to answer this question I also interviewed 7 male

¹ This draws on Michael Mann's (1986) argument that power has various shapes - the most dominant of which are political, military, economic and ideological. These form networks that are interrelated and through which people need to negotiate their life passage.

members of the same two churches, 5 students from His People and from Grace Bible church 6 female members who did not work in professional careers.

At its heart Christianity is a religion of paradox – life is attained through death. Cameron (1991) showed that an important element in the success of Christianity was its ability to contain paradoxes. In the studies of women in Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism there has been little sensitivity to this intrinsic characteristic of Christianity. Social scientists have tried to iron out these paradoxes. I will suggest that the women I studied were able to hold the paradoxical position of being committed to an ideal of wifely submission whilst creating an array of interpretations for themselves such that submission was not something they found oppressive. While Christianity is filled with paradoxes – the Virgin-Mother being the most striking for women – it has always tried to present its message as coherent, bringing order to a confused world. In the turbulence of post-apartheid South Africa I will show that for the women in my study the ordered ‘how to live’ message of these churches was profoundly appealing.

Women were attracted to these churches for many of the reasons already cited. They offered clear gender roles, networks of support, and they encouraged husbands to be more responsible and help with housework and child-care. What they also offered was help in understanding the male world of work. They provided women with leadership, motivation and communication courses and mentoring programmes to help them negotiate the various complexities of corporate life. These churches were attractive because they spoke in the everyday language of the business world, one that men found easy to understand and

women were seeking to comprehend. To explain this in more detail I propose to engage with five broad arguments.

Central Arguments

In the changing South Africa some groups of previously disadvantaged and advantaged young men and women have been able to embrace the changing social, economic and political climate in South Africa and become upwardly mobile, but not everyone has been part of this economic prosperity and many people have remained in stagnant states of poverty. More generally in South Africa the end of apartheid has meant the birth of new symbolic markers and the emergence of new popular cultures. There have also been changes in the social constructs around gender, family, motherhood, work, race, generation and class. For South Africans making sense of these developments has been both exciting and stressful. My study is framed in social constructionist terms because they seem to be the most useful to explain the shifting social and cultural landscape of South Africa. My first argument is therefore that gender, race, class, generation, motherhood and identity are socially constructed largely in a dialectical relationship with the powers of economic, cultural, ideological and political forces, particularly through the social institutions of marriage-family, the workplace, government and religion.

Gender is a basic principle around which society organises itself in various ways such that many social roles are defined by gender. By focusing on the gender experiences of women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches (PCC) I will suggest that gender is built into the structures and practices of social institutions and that

people are continually 'doing gender' by conforming to, modifying, or rejecting the gender ideologies presented by institutions like the family, religion, commerce and politics. In this context some people are looking for ways to make meaning of and negotiate these changes.

Religion makes various contributions to society. Durkheim (1964) argued that it created social cohesion and under apartheid the Afrikaans Dutch Reform Churches could be understood in this way. McGuire (2002), Berger (1969) and Wuthnow (1987; 1992) have suggested that towards the end of the twentieth century at least, religion could best be understood as creating a meta-narrative amongst a variety of narratives, which makes sense of the world and the experiences of daily life. The social construction of the meaning of religion 'is a continuous process of negotiation, reproduction and challenge, but the pace of change is variable in different times and places' (Beckford 2003: 197). My second argument is that the two PCC churches in my study offered people a meta-narrative that helped them make sense of their world and taught them how to negotiate the networks of power. They were engaged in an on-going construction of what appeared to be clearly defined concepts such as motherhood, family, identity, what it meant to be South African, and African culture - all of which had become unstable since the end of apartheid. In contrast to Martin (1990; 2002) I am not suggesting that PCC was a vehicle for cultural revolution, but rather a vehicle that aided some women in negotiating the cultural revolution already underway in South Africa. I recognise that the same version of Christianity may be unhelpful to other women in similar circumstances.

This study focused specifically on women in two PCC churches who had undertaken a tertiary education and worked as professional career women, or had worked as such and were stay-at-home mothers at the time of my study. The studies of women in PCC outside North America focus primarily on working-class or underemployed women. Most of this research has been done on women in Latin America where it has been argued that there is a feminization of religion, which is attractive to the women who attend these churches. Brusco (1986; 1995) pioneered this view and showed how these churches presented a religion and way of life that valued the feminine attributes of care for the family, dependency, stability and a move away from the machismo culture. Women felt empowered to ask their husbands to use their money to provide for the family rather than to waste it on alcohol and womanising as the masculine culture demanded. These churches also offered women a strong network of peer support and encouragement. By contrast, in the churches that I worked with there was not a feminization of religion but a masculinization of the gospel. The language, leadership, focus of the teaching and structure of the churches were masculine. The pastors presented themselves as successful patriarchal heads of families who did not need the props of the shebeen-street culture to prove their masculinity. Providing for the family, being a stable reliable father and not violating their marriage vows were key themes in these churches. They marketed Christianity towards men rather than women. My third argument is therefore about how women related to this masculine message, its ideals of womanhood, the family and the world of work. I am not aware of any other research on this phenomenon in Southern Africa.

The central proclamation of these churches was personal empowerment, and this lay at the heart of their appeal. Sermons repeatedly stressed that all people black and white had 'God given potential' to realise the 'God given purpose' they were destined to fulfil. The average age of the women in my study was 31 years. They had grown-up under apartheid and had learnt that as 'black' or 'coloured' they were inferior - without potential and with no purpose beyond menial tasks. In the new South Africa this has changed, but the psychological effects of apartheid take more than making a cross on the ballot form to redress. The women whom I interviewed found the churches' message of personal potential presented in the motivational sermons, lectures, conferences, workshops and study groups that gave them soft-skills business training, liberating and exciting. For them this message was helpful in redressing some of the psychological effects of apartheid. By providing training in leadership, management, communication, organisation and mentoring, these churches provided desperately needed cultural and social capital that helped women to negotiate the various networks of power in the work place.²

Modern society has as its central feature a process of surveillance and control (Foucault 1979). This concept of power was particularly useful for understanding apartheid South Africa in which all people were continually under surveillance, but this focus on power leaves little room for understanding economic power. Economic power and its shifting nexus points is central to post-apartheid South Africa and the particular group of people in my study. My fourth argument tries to go beyond the terms of Weber's (1965) exploration of the relationship between

² Rick Warren (2002) *The Purpose Driven Life* was the basis of much of this teaching.

religion and work. Drawing on some of Pierre Bourdieu's ideas (1986; 1989; 1990), I shall suggest that the women whom I studied not only changed their patterns of working and spending but also responded positively to various forms of capital that their churches had given them.³ They had not acquired these capital resources from their families of origin but rather from their churches and they used them to achieve success in the work place.

This brings me to my fifth and final area of concern, namely, the family, motherhood and childless women, all of which were sites of contestation and were rapidly being reshaped in the new South Africa. For all the multiple forms of motherhood, womanhood and family in South Africa, the North American ideal of intensive mothering and the nuclear family have gained symbolic dominance as markers of success⁴. As conservative Protestant churches both His People and Grace Bible church presented what appeared to believers to be clear and unproblematic concepts of motherhood and the nuclear family showing how these could be realised in the South African setting. I will show how childless, single women, single mothers and married mothers related to the particular images of motherhood and womanhood presented by these churches and how they used them as markers around which to shape their own identities.

Structure of the thesis

To explore these arguments in more detail I begin by locating them within the debates about Pentecostalism, gender studies - specifically looking at women and

³ See Dianteill (2003), Dillon (2001; 2004) and Swartz (1996) apply Bourdieu's ideas of capital to Catholic and Protestant churches in North America.

⁴ This social ideal regards intense mothering and the nuclear family as complementing each other, but it is recognised that intense mothering is not dependent on the nuclear family.

work and motherhood - and the broader context of research on South Africa. Chapter 2 will highlight some of the gaps in the research and broaden the discussion of women in Pentecostalism to include both professional women and women from Africa. By focusing on the relationship between women, work, family and religion I aim to (1) add new insights to our understanding of the experience of previously disadvantaged women working in professional careers in contemporary South Africa (2) extend the debate about the impact of religion on work and the impact of work on religion and (3) explore the changing understanding of family in South African society. Having introduced the broader theoretical debates in chapter 2, I will give a detailed account of the methodology I used in chapter 3.

My doctoral study developed out of my MA research (Frahm-Arp 2001) in which I examined a cross section of different Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches in the Gauteng area. The aim of this research was to establish major trends across all these churches as well as the differences between them. In this work I was struck by the emphasis on personal development and commercial soft-skills training that His People and Grace Bible Church conducted with the intention of equipping their members to take on leadership roles in the corporate, governmental, health care and education sectors.

This thesis was based on in-depth fieldwork interviews and participant observation, but before going into a detailed analysis of this material I will give an overview of the structure, demography and history of His People in chapter 4 and Grace Bible church in chapter 5. There is no published history of either church,

so these two chapters are a contribution to the broader project of oral history amongst independent churches supported by the current government to expand South Africa's history to include the stories of the previously marginalized majority.

Following these chapters, I will explore the reasons why the women I interviewed joined these churches. In chapter 6, *Church Membership and the Negotiation of Cultural Dislocation*, I will show that the churches offered them a way to make sense of the shifting social boundaries in South Africa. I will substantiate my claim that these churches present a masculinization of religion and show how women respond to this.

One of the most dynamic changes in South Africa has been the entry of historically disadvantaged men and women into corporate leadership. My interviews with women showed that they did not find their professional work difficult but struggled with the cultural and social demands made by their jobs and family expectations. By looking at the relationship between work and religion in chapter 7, *Professional Women and the Message of Purpose*, I will suggest that for the women in my study their churches gave them the social and cultural capital they needed to more effectively negotiate the power dynamics in the world of work.

The most unexpected and radical shifts in post-apartheid South Africa have been the sexual revolution and politicisation of sexuality. In chapter 8, *Singleness, Sexuality and the Dream of Marriage*, I will engage with the debates on popular

culture and sexuality in South Africa. Here I will challenge the trend of current research and suggest that not all women are equally comfortable with the new sexual revolution and that the churches I worked in offered a safe alternative to the hedonistic popular culture.

In chapter 9, *Marriage and the Making of the Nuclear Family*, I will give a detailed analysis of the ideals of marriage, motherhood and family presented by the two churches in my study. Here I will further flesh out my argument that these churches offered a masculinization of religion with particular reference to the space of the home and the roles of parenting and marriage. I will examine how these churches have presented a model of intense mothering⁵ and the nuclear family as the ideal. In this process they were working with emerging popular ideals of motherhood and family presented both by the state and the media, and making these accessible to people. In the concluding chapter I will pull these different threads together and suggest some avenues of further research.

Throughout these chapters I will be showing how His People and Grace Bible church engaged in a distinctive process of developing a Christian South African identity and an Africanization of Christianity. They were trying to establish a homogeneous South African, African culture that united the various tribal/language groups and even made room for white people. There was an attempt to sanitise African Traditional Religious practices and to combine them with conservative Christian teaching in line with the models of conservative

⁵ I am drawing on the work of Hays who in her book *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood* (1996) explores why in an age where more women than ever before work outside the home, society demands the most intense forms of childcare in which the carer is expected to be deeply involved in the day to day care and teaching of each child.

Pentecostal, Charismatic and Evangelical North American Christianity to which they aspired. In so doing, these churches were offering a way to fulfil the government's modern neo-liberal ideals of South Africa as a player on the global stage.

I have focused on gender and argued that gender is socially constructed in the broadest sense of the social, which includes all aspects of social life from structural economic inequalities to daily interactions. Racism and the meaning we give to phenotypically diverse groups is also an ideological construct, and class an economic one. The value we assign to different genders, racial groups and classes is constructed by dominant ideological powers (Sayer 2005). In South Africa the political and ideological power has changed, and I will be exploring how this has been affecting the way in which people understand themselves. The degree of individual agency they have to shape and reshape themselves, to 'do gender', is limited within the confines of economic, material, political and ideological forces. In South Africa the groups of women that I interviewed were in positions where they had a comparatively large degree of personal agency owing to their economic power and the positive Affirmative Action policies governing ideological and political power. These women also chose to join churches, which encouraged them to continually re-write their personal narratives and reshape their identities in order to align themselves with the ideological gender, racial and religious ideal presented to them. The same is not necessarily true for all women in South Africa who have different degrees of agency open to them within the broader structural constraints of their lives.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

Over the twentieth century the tenor of Christianity has been altered by the emergence of a pneumatically sensitive Christianity in the form of various movements, churches and organisations, and the advent of a gender conscious Christianity through which the voices of women in theology, religious organisations and leadership have become audible. Both these moves to re-articulate Christianity have had no centralised authority structures and developed as a variety of fractured groups with different agendas. In a predominantly Christian country like South Africa these trends have impacted the religious landscape, yet little research has been done to qualify or quantify these phenomena. In this chapter I will give an overview of the research that has been done into pneumatically centred Christianity, women's studies and the current debates in South Africa. I aim to identify and resolve some ambiguities in this literature and show that a systematic study of professional women in Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in South Africa is an important area, which to date has not been examined. My study makes reference to key developments in this form of Christianity in North America, Latin America, Europe, and Asia; but in the main is focused on Africa. The second section of this chapter will concentrate on women's studies. Here I propose to highlight debates on gender, work, motherhood and the family, concentrating primarily on research done into women in conservative Christianity. In the final section I shall explore the key debates

currently dominating social research on South African society relevant to my thesis.

Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity

I will refer to pneumatically sensitive Christianity in its most current form in Sub-Saharan Africa as Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity⁶ (PCC). Following Mann's (1988: 6) argument that periodization is a key part in explaining the development of a social phenomenon – I would like to suggest that the twentieth century witnessed various revivals and movements that have centred on the work of the Holy Spirit in different parts of the world, and these can be divided into five periods⁷. Together they make up a complex of pneumatically sensitive expressions of Christianity.

The Revival Period

The first period, or Revival Period from 1900 to 1910, saw a variety of revival movements throughout the world that highlighted the work of the Holy Spirit.⁸

⁶B. Meyer (2004b) has identified this form of Christianity in Africa as Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches, but which I refer to as Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity because the terms Pentecostal and Charismatic are used almost interchangeably in Africa, and these new churches draw from both movements. Meyer used the word 'Church' because she was referring to a collection of independent churches, but there are also several para-church organisations that, in South Africa at least, play an important role e.g. Youth with a Mission and Campus Crusade. They need to be included in the same category and therefore I refer to these churches and para-church bodies collectively as 'Christianity'. This form of Christianity has been variously referred to as Pentecostalism, the Charismatic movement, the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement, Neo-Pentecostalism, or Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches over the last century.

⁷Blumhofer (1993: 2-9) identified Classical Pentecostalism (1901-1920) the Full Gospel period (1920-1940), the third force period (1940-1970) and the popular culture period (1970-2000). Synan (1997; 2004) suggested that Pentecostalism was a tradition which has given rise to three waves of Christianity: the early Pentecostal-Holiness movement, the Charismatic movement and more recently indigenous Pentecostalism in Latin American, Asia and Africa. Pentecostalism has also been seen as part of various waves of Christianity that emerged in the past hundred years, see Berg and Pretiz (1994) and Wagner (1998).

⁸Hollenweger (1974, 1997, 2000) Conn (1977), McGee (1986), Cox (1996) and Roebuck (1999) identified the Azusa Street mission as the cradle of Pentecostalism. This has recently been challenged by Hwa (2003: 65-67), Bergunder (2004), Cerillo (1997: 29-35), Bueno (1999) and Anderson (2004: 139-141).

Although there has been some disagreement⁹ as to when Pentecostalism started, the enormously successful Azusa Street Revival that begun in 1906 in downtown Los Angeles is usually cited as the beginning. Here the teaching of Charles Fox Parham that baptism in the Holy Spirit was evidenced by the ability to speak in tongues was popularised by William Seymour. Initially the revival attracted the disinherited men and women, black and white, foreigner and American (Anderson 1979; Raboteau 1978; Wacker 1986; Blumhofer 1995; Sanders 1997; Sanders 1999). Baptism in the Holy Spirit gave believers access to new spiritual power enabling them to speak in different languages, heal the sick and give prophetic messages. It also assured them of their place in the pre-millennial eschaton (Droogers 1994; Synan 1997: 93-8).

The Institutionalisation Period

From 1910 to 1940 an institutionalisation process took place in which the revival message and energy became homogenized and the loose prayer meetings formed into churches. The early Pentecostal churches¹⁰ are generally referred to as Classical Pentecostal. During this period the movement became theologically fundamental (Spittler 1990), more inward-looking and gender hierarchical. In Europe and North America their members slowly became upwardly mobile (Kay 2000; Wacker 2001; Blumhofer 2004). This period saw the establishment of the Apostolic Faith Mission (Oosthuisen 1987: 44-6; De Wet 1989), the Full Gospel

⁹Blumhofer (1993:2) and Burgess, McGee & Alexander (1988: 657) maintain that the movement began in 1901 when under Charles Fox Parham's prayer direction Agnes Ozman, a student at his bible school in Texas, began to speak in tongues. Synan (1997: 93-98) suggested that the movement began when it became a popular revival in 1906 under Seymour leadership and that Seymour was only loosely associated with Fox Parham.

¹⁰ For example the predominantly white Assemblies of God (est. 1914) and the black Church of God in Christ (est. 1914 Cleveland Tennessee).

Church of God (Roebuck 1999) and the Assemblies of God church (Watt 1991) in South Africa.

During this period African Independent Churches (AICs) in Sub-Saharan Africa expanded significantly. A careful study of the history (see Etherington 1979; Odendaal 1984; Kiernan 1995) theology (Martin 1964; Cazziol 1987; Sindima 1994), social symbolical world created by religions (Comaroff 1985; Fields 1985; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991) and practices (West 1975; Kiernan 1979; Kiernan 1980; Kiernan 1991; Kiernan 1999) of these churches has led me to suggest elsewhere (Frahm-Arp 2001) that the Zionist and Apostolic churches in South Africa are AICs and not Pentecostal or Pentecostal-Charismatic churches (see also Makhubu 1988; Becken 1993: 334)¹¹. Spirit focused AICs and Pentecostal organisations can be categorised under a general umbrella of pneumatically centred expressions of Christianity, but it limits our understanding of the social, political and theological currents in Christianity if we identify them as part of the same movement. With regard to Sub-Saharan Africa more generally, Gifford (2004b: 170), van Dijk (1992), Larbi (2001) and Ojo (1996) have been disinclined to regard AICs as a variant of Pentecostalism. This of course has political implications as the magnitude of Pentecostalism in Africa is reduced if the AICs are taken out of the equation. Similar tensions involving the categorisation of indigenous and Classical Pentecostal churches have also been prevalent in Latin American and Asia Pentecostal studies (Bays 1993; Petersen 1994; Bays 1996; Freston 2001; Anderson 2004).

¹¹ Sundkler (1961; 1976), Anderson (2000), Poewe (1994:16) and Anderson and Pillay (1997) suggested that Zionist AICs were a type of Pentecostalism. Hollenweger (1974; 1997), Maxwell (1999b) and Cox (1996) made a similar argument for Aladura, Praying or Spirit churches in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Healing Period

From 1940 to 1970 the Evangelical movement became enormously popular, and the Charismatic movement spread through many mainline churches (Massingbed Ford 1971; O'Conner 1971; McGuire 1974; McGuire 1977; McGuire 1982; McDonnell and Montague 1991; Hocken 1996; Hocken 1997; Elkington 1998; Cartledge 2004; Hocken 2004). This third period could be seen as a Healing Period because the focus of the Pentecostal and Charismatic messages was largely on healing (Ford 1971). The deep rifts between Pentecostals and mainline Christians also began to heal as ecumenical bridges were built¹² (Synan 2004: 162).

In Sub-Saharan Africa the AICs were experiencing remarkable growth during this time; and research in Africa was turned towards this phenomenon (Peel 1968; Fabian 1971; Jules-Rosette 1979; Ranger 1994; for an overview see Sundkler 1961; Ranger 1986). They offered Christian healing set in an African paradigm in which the Holy Spirit conquered the forces of evil and brought wellness to the sick (Armitage 1976; Daneel 1970; Kiernan 1979; Kiernan 1990; Oosthuisen 1992; Ndlovu 1993).

The Mass Expansion Period

Mass Christian expansion on an international scale was the hallmark of the fourth period from 1970 to 1990. During this period a 'third wave'¹³ of Christians

¹² By the 1980s this earlier ecumenism between mainline Charismatic churches, Classical Pentecostals and the various Pentecostal-Charismatic hybrid churches lessened significantly (Harrell 1990:14).

¹³ Part of this new wave were the Vineyard churches and Fuller Theological Seminar (est 1981 by John Wimber) and the Apostolic churches started by C. Peter Wagner, for discussions of this see

emerged who all experienced Pentecost style gifts of the Spirit and freer contemporary forms of worship but rejected the labels 'Pentecostal', 'Charismatic' or 'Evangelical' (Synan 2004: 162). They all shared a common pneumatic experience of the Holy Spirit effecting change in people's lives.

The media-evangelists of North America spread their message of personal expansion and prosperity through the medium of television, radio, music, video and print worldwide and inspired hundreds of people in both prosperous and impecunious countries to take up the message of personal material prosperity through faith. There was a flourish of Christian mass consumer products offering everything from Christian diets and sex manuals to musical entertainment and TV stars (McDannell 1995; Ward 2003: 197). Tele-evangelists combined charismatic worship music, personal soap operas, motivational lectures and variety show entertainment on a spontaneous and emotional level where God was not only preached about but was allegedly witnessed in action, directly involved in people's lives (Schultze 1990a; Schultze 1990b). The prosperity gospel declared that God would bless his faithful people with financial prosperity and physical well-being; it was a 'veritable spiritual Amway' that in America did not offer 'healing for the sick, but security for the well; not consolation to the poor, but confirmation to the successful' (Harrell 1990: 13). In the poorer parts of the world this message of prosperity appealed to the disinherited, and the upwardly mobile alike.

Coggins & Hiebert (1989), Wagner (1998) and Synan (2004). His People regarded themselves as Apostolic in nature.

During this period in Africa the Charismatic movement became popular in many Catholic Churches (Okeke 1989; Ojo 1997a) and some dramatic Pentecostal outreach missions paved the way for the later PCC churches (Gifford 1987; Gifford 1991; Gustafsson 1991; John 1997: 133-4). In Latin American countries new hybrids, which I will call Pentecostal-Evangelical Christianity¹⁴ (PEC) multiplied in a variety of complex ways in response to the different economic, cultural and political conditions (Garrard-Burnett and Stoll 1993; Freston 2001). Studies on this phenomena were divided between those who argued that it helped the dispossessed engage with modernity, democracy and might lead to a degree of upward mobility (Willems 1967; Glazier 1980; Martin 1990; Sherman 1997; Dodson 1998); and others who argued that Pentecostalism was apolitical, conservative and merely re-alienated believers by focusing their attention on the premillennial and apocalyptic return of Christ (Lalive d'Epina 1969; Hoffnagel 1980; Stoll 1990; Nuñez and Taylor 1996).

The Period of Individual Empowerment

From the beginning of the 1990s the tone and emphasis of these churches began to change, and a new period, of Individual Empowerment emerged. Pentecostalism continued to grow worldwide but there was a general move away from an unabashed prosperity gospel to variations on this theme that focused more on personal empowerment and well-being.

¹⁴ In Latin America all Protestants were referred to as *evangélicos* and Pentecostals are interchangeably referred to as either Evangelicals or Pentecostals Nuñez & Taylor (1999:3).

Period of Individual Empowerment in Latin America

In Latin America the question of religion and politics continued with some superficial studies that divided Latin America into neat PEC and Catholic sectors (Haynes 1994; Johnston and Sampson 1994) and other detailed comparative studies between Catholic ecclesial base communities, PECs and African religions (Ireland 1991; Burdick 1993; Smith 1995; Burdick 1998; Smith 1998; Steigenga 2001; Gill 2004). PEC could at best be a vehicle for economic development and cultural reform, but did not lead to a larger democratic revolution and improvement of poor communities (Berryman 1996; Martin 2002). In-depth research needs to be done on the actual influence that religion exercises in helping people to cope with their jobs.

From very different perspectives researchers argued that the experience of faith has given meaning and richness to believers' lives (Mariz 1994; Bomann 1999). Some maintained that PECs were successful amongst the poor because in a multi-faith market place they preached what the poor wanted to hear and did not have their resources tied up in bureaucratic structures (Gill 1998; Gill 1999: 71). The popularity of PEC was continuously equated to the autonomous culture it created rendering it indifferent to popular culture (Lehmann 1997); or because it worked with popular and traditional cultures, re-interpreting or re-energising them (Cox 1999; Greenfield and Droogers 2001).

PEC has been understood as an alternative route to modernity that has helped people become connected into the modern social networks around them (Berryman 1999). It has been linked to a 'spirit of globalisation' (Corten and

Marshall-Frantani 2001), offering individuals various ways of negotiating the personal, local and global challenges of globalisation (Peterson et al. 2001; Robbins 2004). It is argued by some that global Pentecostalism is bringing about the ‘reinvention and reinception of Christianity’ (Hopkins et.al. 2001: 47; Jenkins 2002), while others are less optimistic (Miguez 1998).

The Period of Individual Empowerment in Africa

A new style of Christianity has been nowhere more apparent than in Africa. By the beginning of the twenty-first century there were 83 million Independent and 126 million Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians (PCC) in Africa (Anderson 2001b; Barrett 2001). Over the past two decades some AICs have reshaped themselves into forms of PCC (Meyer 1999; Maxwell 2001; Ukah 2003); and the Charismatic movement has continued to have a dynamic impact on mainline churches (Ojo 1988; ter Haar 1992; Asamoah-Gyadu 1997; Meyer 1999; Ayuk 2002), making it hard to establish firm taxonomies. More comparative research needs to be done not only on the different strands of pneumatically sensitive Christianity but also on how they have interacted with one another.

PCC presents a dualistic worldview that rigidly divides good and evil. It has centred on personal commitment – ‘being born again’ – where an individual becomes something new, forgiven and holy. The demons, understood within the context of African cosmology, are cast out by the power of the Holy Spirit and the believers have victory over evil, illness, dis-ease and poverty (Asamoah-Gyadu 1997; Van Dijk 1997; Meyer 1999; Onyinah 2001). Believers are expected to live according to a strict moral code to maintain their purity in a corrupt world. In its

most recent forms it has not been a world-rejecting faith but rather one that embraced and tried to change the world by encouraging members to evangelise their neighbours and become leaders in all aspects of civic and economic life. Emphasis has been placed on building communities as secure places that shield members from the forces of evil (John 1997: 132; Maxwell 2005). Here believers develop new personal and commercial skills that support them in managing the various demands of modernising neo-liberal Africa economies - for example in Zimbabwe (Maxwell 2000; Maxwell 2005); South Africa (Garner 2000); Malawi (Van Dijk 1992: 160); Ghana, particularly Otabil's International Central Gospel Church (Gifford 1994; Gifford 2004a) and Nigeria (Ojo 1996).

Many of these churches appealed to people who aspired to wealth as they taught that riches could be claimed from God through prayer (Hunt 2000; Gifford 2004a). In contrast, other churches taught upward mobility through diligent, honourable hard work (Van Dijk 1992; Gifford 2004a). Studies have not explored the relationship between work and religion beyond a Weberian thesis (John 1997: 129; Maxwell 1998; Meyer 1999). No longitudinal studies have been done to examine whether people's economic conditions have really changed in the predicted manner. While Gifford (2004a) has focused on the relationship between religion and economics, he has not explored the impact that the churches teachings had on believers' day-to-day experiences in the work place.

Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has led to a boom in various local multimedia industries in Africa (Hackett 1998; Asonzeh 2003: 203), but not in South Africa. More research needs to be done to explain why there has been no

similar media boom in South Africa. In this process, these churches have also reshaped the symbolic meaning and power of global consumer goods through prayer. Exploring churches in Ghana, Meyer showed that the believers saw western products as inherently dangerous, potentially leading Christians into sin and could only be consumed if they were first prayed over and thereby stripped of their power (Meyer 1995; Meyer 1998a: 772-4; Meyer 1998b). But she failed to adequately discuss the intricate identity formation at play as these believers consumed western goods that had been symbolically re-interpreted.

PCC and their public political voice in landscapes where religion and politics have never been divided, and has only recently become a topic of research (Marshall 1993; Haynes 1996; Gifford 1998; Meyer 1999; Ellis and ter Haar 2004), but Gifford (2004a: 170-1) has argued that we need to be careful not to overstate the impact that these Christians have had. The debate about Africanization, modernity and the relationship between PCC and traditional African religious and cultural practices has received considerable attention (Van Dijk 1992; John 1997; Maxwell 1998; Meyer 1998b; Van Dijk 1999; Engelke 2004). Meyer brought new light to this debate by arguing that, in Ghana, the demonisation of traditional African practices of ancestor veneration and cosmology of spirits as generally evil, meant that these churches were ironically keeping the memory of African traditional religious beliefs alive in the urban setting (Meyer 1992; Meyer 1998b; Meyer 1999). Breaking with the old African traditional practices should be understood as part of the conversion narrative rather than an achieved state (Engelke 2004). This falls within a long standing debate about the westernisation of Africa through Christianity and the search for an authentic African Christianity

(Mbiti 1980; Mbiti 1990; Bediako 1995). Further comparative research needs to be done to understand the relationship between African traditional cultures, modernity, and PCC in contemporary southern Africa (but see the work on AICs, missionaries and African traditions by MacGaffey 1994; Schoffeleers 1994; Maxwell 1999a; Peel 2003).

Witchcraft in Africa has more recently been seen not as a 'traditional' concept but as a contemporary device for coping with: modernity (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Geschiere 1997; Meyer 1999; Englund and Leach 2000); global consumption at a local level (Meyer 1998a; Parish 1999; Colson 2000; Englund 2004); domestic violence (Geschiere and Fisiy 1994); politics (Geschiere 1997; Ellis and ter Haar 2004) and post-modernity – the irrational and fantastic (Onyinah 2001). These studies recognised the centrality of witchcraft in societies of turmoil and conflict but may lead to an overemphasis on witchcraft in research into contemporary African societies.

The global nature of PCC stressed that the individual was part of a larger international community of the saved and yet was also active in a local religion able to adapt to the specific needs of different locations (Hackett 1998; Marshall-Fratani 1998; Maxwell 1998; Meyer 1998a; Poewe 1994). In this sense, the debate between the local and the global has been overcome as the cultural specificity of the local was not seen as being subsumed by the global but as being an essential part of the dialectics of flow and closure (Clifford 1988; Meyer and Geschiere 1999; Meyer 2004b: 459). Not all researchers agree with this argument. Some maintain that Pentecostalism is global because it reshapes itself

to meet the local needs of the people, often taking on aspects of folk religion (Cox 1996; Hollenweger 1997; Anderson 1999; Anderson 2004). What these debates hide is the economic division between the various 'global' PCC networks of exchange between first and third world members. (Van Dijk 1997; Hunt and Lightly 2001; Corten and Marshall-Frantani 2001; Hunt 2002; Freston 2005).

The Period of Individual Empowerment in North America, Europe and Asia

This study is focused on PCC in South Africa and so I cannot cover the multiple imbrications within the contemporary global complex of pneumatically sensitive churches and organisations. Here I will just highlight a few pertinent issues. In diverse ways the broad movement has also taken root in Asia. For detailed studies of the social impact see for example Martin (2002), Freston (2001), Coleman (2000) and Richardson (2004). And for a debate about the indigenisation and theology of these churches see Ma (1997; 2004), Ma and Manzies (1997) and Yeow (1998).

Particularly in America and Europe, rational choice has become a fashionable - but contested - theoretical means by which to understand the Christian 'marketplace' as the mainline churches have declined and the conservative Pentecostal-Charismatic-Evangelical hybrid mega-churches have increased in numbers (Ellison and Sherkat 1995; Gill 1999; Stewart-Gambino 2001; Jerolmack and Porpora 2004). For dissenting opinions see Francis et al. (2000) and Tammey (2002). Studies have also shown that many of these churches have grown because they appealed to immigrants and black people in Europe and North America.

These studies have focused on the racial boundedness of these churches and on issues of identity (Toulis 1997; Van Dijk 1997; Beckford 1998; ter Haar 1998).

Coming up to the centenary of Pentecostalism there has been a new focus on the history of the movement written from general (usually white bias) perspectives (McGee 1986; McGee 1992; Blumhofer 1993; Hocken 1997; Synan 1997; Blumhofer et al. 1999; Bundy 1999; Kay 2000), from Africa-American points of view (Anderson 1979; Sanders 1999; Millner 2001; Wacker 2001) and from gender sensitive viewpoints (Blumhofer 1995; Sanders 1997; Blumhofer 2004). Pentecostal-Charismatic-Evangelicals have also been asking their own questions about identity (Crowe 1993; Vondey 1999), and these have led to debates about what their theology is – or whether they have any theology at all (Percy 1997; Kärkkäinen 1998; Kärkkäinen 1999a; Kärkkäinen 1999b; Burgess and van der Mass 2002; Macchia 2002; Cartledge 2004; Kay 2004). There has also been a growing body of research particularly in North America exploring why women, in an age of feminism and gender equality, choose to become members of churches that expect them to take on conservative gender-stereotyped roles as mothers and home-makers.

Gender, work, family and religion

Studies of women in conservative churches fall within the broader arena of women's studies. There are three main areas of interest within this discipline; theoretical issues, political concerns and studies of practice that look at the experience of women as employers or employees, mothers, wives and citizens. Over the past two decades gender has become the central analytical concept in

these studies (Hawkesworth 1997: 650). It has been used throughout a wide variety of concerns in markedly different ways to account for social organisations that differentiate between men and women (Barrett 1980; Barrett 1987; MacKinnon 1987; Hawkesworth 1990; Shanley and Pateman 1991); explore the semiotics of sex, sexuality and the body (de Lauretis 1984; Suleiman 1985; Doane 1987; Silverman 1988; Weeks 1989; Davis 1997); explain oppression and power (Walby 1986; Connell 1987; Boneparth and Stoper 1988; Walby 1990); illuminate our understanding of individual psychology (Chodorow 1978); and, individual aspirations and identity (Butler 1986; Zack et.al. 1998; Butler 1999; Brah 2000). In general terms gender has been seen as an analytic category with which to think about and contest various human power relationships, social activity and modes of self-understanding. These forms of organisation are not based on the naturalization of sex difference, or as a mere social variable assigned differently to people in accordance with their various cultures (Harding 1986: 17; Haraway 2001).

Gender and the study of women

Theoretically the contemporary field of women-gender studies has been dominated by the 'cultural turn', which moved away from modernist materialist concerns about how the subordination of women was produced, maintained, and changed under structures of male dominance (Delphy 1984; Mies 1986; Walby 1986; Waters 1989; Walby 1990) and engaged with post-structuralist and post-modern theories, exploring perspectives of identity, subjectivity and representation in the construction of gender (Connell 1987; Alcoff 1988; Fraser and Nicolson 1988; Barrett 1992; Connell 1995; Josselson 1996; Butler 1999).

Scholars using gender as cultural representation, language and subjectivity have been criticised for: 1) turning gender into a universal 'causal force in domains as disparate as psyche, self, and social relations', such that it is afforded ontological status (Hawkesworth 1997: 682); 2) seeing gender was a universal concept equally experienced by all women without taking the constraints of race and class into account (Walker 1983; Christian 1985; Simms and Malveaux 1986; Collins 1989a; Davis 1989; Narayan 1989; hooks 1992; Mama 1995; Jarrett-Macauley 1996; Mullings 1997; Masenya 1997; Narayan 1997; Arndt 2000; hooks 2000; Oduyoye 2001); and 3) failing to take into account the structural and material inequalities in the everyday interactions and to recognize that meaning is made both at the level of the wider culture and personal social experiences (Acker 1989; Hennessy 1993; Landry and MacLean 1993; Hennessy and Ingraham 1997; Hennessy 2000; Jackson 2001: 284).

Researchers and activists concerned with political inequalities faced by women generally fall into two broad categories. First, those who study the oppression of women in developed countries from a materialist perspective (Davis 1989; French 1992; Jackson and Moores 1995; Hennessy 2000) or a cultural discourse view (Spivak 1987; Howell and Day 2000). Second, studies of women in developing countries that have highlighted the inequalities and oppression faced by women (Mohanty 1988; Mohanty et al. 1991; Makgetla 1995; Afshar 1996; Pettman 1996; Quisumbing and Maluccio 2003) at times casting them in oversimplified characterisations as victims under male dominance (Coquery- Vidrovitch 1997) and tending to see them as a collective homogeneous unit (Lockwood 1995);

subjects rather than actors (Hopkins 1996). Studies looking into effective women's movements and political mobilization have become more sensitive to questions of agency (Seidman 1993; Ray and Korteweg 1999) and identity construction (Minha-ha 1989; Bozzoli 1991; Kalu 1994; Moghadam 1994; Narayan 1997).

Greater insight into the lived experiences of these women has also shown that the concepts of household, gender and the private and public divide that dominate western scholarship, are not the same in the developing world (Amadiume 1987; Dube and Palriwala 1990; Moallem 2001). We need to remain aware that 'the way in which gender is conceptually related to other identities such as race, ethnicity, and religion differs very much from place to place and across time,' (Tripp 2000: 649; Warner et al. 1997). The majority of research has centred on the lack of education amongst girls (Summers 1994; Blanc and Lloyd 1995), generally high fertility rates but which have begun to drop in some urban areas (Caldwell et al. 1992) and the economic disadvantages faced by women in developing countries (Bay 1982; Saito and Weidemann 1990; Mitter and Rowbotham 1997). These gender gaps need to be addressed if countries are to develop successfully (Charlton 1984; Tinker 1990; Visvanathan and Nisonoff 1997; Witwer 1997).

Women and work

During the twentieth century the work women do has radically changed (Spain and Bianchi 1996) creating a tension for women between the demands of the home and the work place – as productive work has been valued and care/reproductive work idealised but undervalued (Kozol 1994). The tenor of

these studies shows that ideologically there has not been a universal model of womanhood (Lamphere et al. 1993; Landsman 1995: 33).

The field of women and work has been dominated by three primary sites of concern in developed countries: 1) the under-representation of women in senior management and the devaluation of women's public work (Cohen and Huffman 2003a; 2003b); 2) the negative impact of childcare on women's earning and career advancement (Allen and Alan 1999; Drobic et al. 1999; Garey 1999; Phipps et al. 2001); and 3) the reality that women continued to do the majority of unpaid care work at home (Oakley 1974; O'Connell 1994; Shelton and John 1996; Milkie and Peltola 1999; Sayer 2005).

Research into women and work in Africa has shown that the reproductive work of women has been socially valued but that this has been problematically bound up with women gaining social status only as mothers (Gaitskell and Kimble 1982; Wells 1991; Walker 1995; Gaitskell 1997). In Africa most women work and care for their children at the same time and have often been less oppressed on the basis of their gender than western women (Ware 1975; Amadiume 1987; Robertson 1991; Amadiume 1997). Women's work has largely been bound up with family enterprises, resulting in less devaluation of women's work in developing countries (Mammen and Paxson 2000). But women have been economically disadvantaged with limited options beyond farming, running shebeens and beer brewing, petty trading and prostitution (White 1990; Schmidt 1992; Valodia 2001). Research that has been more culturally and subjectively reflective has voiced the experiences of women suggesting that the greatest sources of stress in their lives

were the physical and emotional strain of their economic insecurity (Bozzoli 1991; Avotri and Walters 1999; Loewenson 2001; Gysels et al. 2002;).

In South Africa there has been very little research into the experiences of historically disadvantaged women who have entered the professional work force over the last 10 years, (Bowmaker-Falconer et al. 1997; and Casale 2004 who deal with Affirmative Action more generally; but see Human 1996; Rospabé 2002; Mathur-Helm 2004). There has also been no published research into the relationship between professional women, work and religion in South Africa (but see De Vault 1991; Godsell 2000 who deal with some aspects of this debate). An area that has received much attention has been women and motherhood.

Motherhood

Motherhood, its meaning and construction has been one of the most productive areas of research in women studies (Potuchek 2001). It is a critical social system organised on gender specific roles and centres on the 'social practices of nurturing and caring for dependent children' (Arendell 2000: 1192) which is almost universally given over to women.

Politically, maternalism¹⁵ has entered debates about the adequate care of mothers' physical, material, political and emotional needs by the state (Koven and Michel 1993; Lasch-Quinn 1993; Pedersen 1993; Ladd-Taylor 1994; Brush 1996), reproductive and sexual autonomy debates (Macklin 1994; McCann 1994) and discussions on representation of mothers as 'good' or 'deviant' mothers who do

¹⁵ Maternalism refers to "maternal practice" – the nurturing, protecting, and training of . . . children' see Arendell (2000: 1194).

not fit the mothering ideal (Kaplan 1992; Ross 1993; Boris 1994; Kaplan 1997). Experiential studies of motherhood have highlighted the emotional experience of mothering (Ross 1995) and its multiple meanings (Rich 1986; Josselson 1996). Motherhood has been more powerful than marital status or occupation as an identity marker for women (Rogers and White 1998).

In contemporary western society the dominant ideal has become 'intense mothering' (Hays 1996; Arendell 2000; Potuchek 2001). As South Africa has moved into a democracy the construct of motherhood has begun to change but scholarship has paid little attention to this. Other writers have argued that care-giving as nurturing should not be divorced from economic provision and a politics of obligation - showing that for many women the most important aspect of care was providing for the material needs of their families (Boris 1994; Nakano et al. 1994; Garey 1999). Lacking in these general debates was an engagement with the impact of religion as a social variable.

Women, family and religion

The institution and concept of family has also been socially constructed and there is no one static or universal form (Gittins 1992; Cherlin 1996; Treas 1999). Limited research has been done on families and marriage in Sub-Saharan Africa (Hastings 1973; Adams 2004: 1077) or the interrelationship between family and religion (Pankhurst and Houseknecht 2000: 3). North American studies have found that religion has been a powerful force in legitimating various forms of family structure (D'Antonio 1980; D'Antonio 1983; D'Antonio and Aldous 1983; Pearce and Axinn 1998: 812; Sherkat and Ellison 1999; Christiano 2000;

Pankhurst and Houseknecht 2000), maintaining gender equalities (Glass and Jacobs 2005), socialising children (Pearce and Axinn 1998; Wilcox 1998), and forming marital stability (Greeley 1990; Waite and Lehrer 2003).

Women and religion

The gender *leitmotiv* of Christianity has intrinsically seen women as ‘bodily’¹⁶ and forced them into either the role of the temptress or the mother-saint – emotional and flesh bound unlike men who were perceived as spiritual and cognitive (Coakley 2002: 57, 63). Women have been seen as dangerous to men (Ruether 1974: 156-7). Since the Middle Ages men have tried to contain this ‘bodily’ danger of women in an impossible ideal represented by the Virgin-Mother (Warner 1976; Hamington 1995; Boss 2000). While Protestant churches stripped the image of Mary of much of its power, the ideal of salvation for the family through female submission was continued (Dobson 1995; Johnson 1998).

Christian feminists have worked to uncover the voices and experiences of women in Christianity, which had largely been silenced or edited by men (Daly 1975; Christ and Plaskow 1979; Christ 1980; Schüssler Fiorenza 1983; Bynum 1987; Johnson 1992; Schüssler Fiorenza 1992; Børresen 1993; Winter et al. 1994; Børresen 1995; Bynum 1995; Jantzen 1995; Christ 2001; Clifford 2001; Coakley 2002). There have also been a few African woman theologians making valuable contributions to the debates, for example Amoah and Oduyoye (1988), Masenya (1997), Oduyoye (2001) and Rakoczy (2004).

¹⁶ In this it has been deeply influence by the writings of St Augustine (1984; 1991).

These theological developments have led to changes in how women experienced their faith, and research has focused on the differences between the religious experience of men and women (DeVaus and McAllister 1987; Thompson 1991; Miller and Hoffman 1995). It has also investigated the social implication of female leadership (Jackson et al. 1983; Lawless 1988; Wallace 1991; Wallace 1992; Lehman 1993; Nesbitt 1997; Zikmund et al. 1998) and the changing nature of women's voluntary church work (Ammerman and Roof 1995; Hertel 1995; Marler 1995). Comparatively little work has been done on lay women in churches (but see Gilkes 1985; Gillespie 1992; Pevey et al. 1996). Some women have chosen to move away from patriarchal religions altogether and join Wicca or the growing number of women's spiritual groups (Neitz 2001). Overall these changes have led to something of a crisis in what it means to be a 'good Christian woman' (Prelinger 1992).

Not all women have accepted the feminist theology and liberation of women into religious leadership. Many women have continued to submit to a theology of gender subordination. As such, they are part of a significant number of women within Christianity, Judaism and Islam who have chosen to join conservative patriarchal denominations/ groups. These women felt that feminism left no space for God or the homemaker and that their new religions gave them meaning and structure, which was previously lacking in their lives (Davidman 1991; Becker 1997; Bryant 1999; Manning 1999; Moallem 2001). The growing body of research exploring the concept of wifely submission has shown how women combined selected features of contemporary culture and feminism in the workplace with aspects of patriarchal religious concepts of the wifely submission

in the home to create a new hybrid (Hunter 1987; Rose 1987; Stacey and Gerard 1990; Griffith 1997; Brasher 1998; Beaman 1999; Manning 1999). 'Sociological evidence suggests that the anti-feminist image is in fact a stereotype glossing over some deep conflicts within evangelical ranks over the nature of women's role in family and society,' (Bendroth 1993: 2).

Elizabeth Brusco (1986; 1995) spearheaded research into women in Pentecostal-Evangelical churches in Latin America and showed that there was a culture of feminization, in which the work and traits of women were valued. Women were freed from the confining stereotypical roles of traditional Latin American culture and given space in which to re-shape their identities and to re-interpret their past (Boudewijne 1991; Sloomweg 1991; Mariz 1994; Drogus 1997; Burdick 1998; Peterson et al. 2001). They offered them supportive networks to help them cope with a future either in Latin America or as migrant workers in North America (Flora 1975; Gill 1990; Martin 1998; Peterson et al. 2001). Similar trends were found in Europe (Cucchiari 1990) and North America (Gilkes 1985; Townsend Gilkes 1996; Mira and Lorentzen 2002). In contrast to the Revival Period women in contemporary Pentecostal-Charismatic churches take on low level leadership roles (Benvenuti 1997; Sanders 1997; Nilsson 1999; Chapman 2004). Published studies on women in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Africa are extremely limited and this study is therefore a contribution to this area (but see Mate 2002).

South Africa

The first ten years of South Africa's democracy have been a time of unexpected contradictions and rapid social change, of which I will highlight key areas linked to my thesis (Glaser 2001; Sparks 2003; Mbembe and Nutall 2004a; Posel 2005).

Governance

The African National Congress (ANC) shifted from a socialist liberation party to a neo-liberal government during the first half of the 1990s. Over the last ten years they have established a 'fragile stability' in which 'the non-racial regime is fully accepted as legitimate, but the immense social problems which were apartheid's legacy remain a threat to social order' (Beall et al. 2005: 681; Gordon 2006). From the severe economic and administrative weakness of the transition period the government has brought order to taxation, basic policing and border control (Sparks 2003; Beall et al. 2005; IMF 2005).

Lowered inflation rates and a strengthening currency have helped to regulate the macro economy to some degree, but it remains fragile (IMF 2005; STATSSA 2005). Commentators place different emphasis on the importance of the following factors in weakening the country's economy. 1) Limited foreign investment (Hayter et al. 2001). 2) The relocation of major South African conglomerates headquarters to Britain (Carmody 2002) and the emigration of highly skilled professionals (McDonald and Crush 2002). 3) A capital rather than labour orientated economy in a country with elevated levels of unskilled labour (Hayter et al. 2001). 4) The government's 'reliance on economic liberalism and market fundamentalism as the primary vehicles for effecting' economic growth (Carmody

2002; Mhone and Edigheji 2003: 13). 5) Its insistence that the Reconstruction and Development Programme's (RDP) economic plan meet the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) standards before the needs of the people (Sparks 2003; Beall et al. 2005). 6) Many critics argue that the government has not come up with new solutions to challenge neo-liberalism and take South Africa forward as a model of economic development (Bond 2000; Marais 2001).

The latest government report from May 2005 estimated that the population numbered 46.9 million of which 26.7% were unemployed (STATSSA 2005)¹⁷. But these statistics need to be qualified together with the government's claims of job creation (Casale et al. 2004; Noble et al. 2004; Klasen and Woolard 2005)¹⁸ and the national employment, underemployment and unemployment rates (Standing et al. 1996; Schlemmer and Levitz 1998; Bhorat 1999; Klasen and Woolard 1999). The average real earning has fallen by 20% in this period and 30% of the working population earn less than the minimum wage¹⁹. Economic power, unlike political power, has not been redistributed but remains in the hands of the white minority and a small black elite on the ANC side²⁰ (Bond 2000; Landsberg 2001).

¹⁷ The IMF (2005) estimated national unemployment in 2005 at 25.3%.

¹⁸ These reports show that unemployment in rural areas is higher than in urban areas, that the effect of unemployment on households and the lack of state support means that limited resources are shared across a large extended kinship network and that it is more significant to talk about 'relative poverty as defined by reference to socially perceived necessities in terms of activities, possessions and access to services' Noble, Ratcliffe & Wright (2004:2).

¹⁹ Not everyone has been equally affected. The average real earnings for Whites have fallen slightly, for Indians and Coloureds they have improved slightly and for Blacks they have declined such that their real earnings have fallen by almost 25%, see Casale, Muller & Posel (2004).

²⁰ There is no significant black elite unaffiliated to the ANC, except for a small minority of amaZulu political and economic leaders linked to Inkatha, but being outside the government they have a limited arena of influence.

While social grants, welfare, education and service delivery has been better than under the previous government it continues to be unequal with high levels of corruption (Maylam 1995; Torkington 2000; Lodge 2002: 753; Greenstein 2003; Hyslop 2005; Lodge 2005). The promised housing programmes have not been effectively implemented (Bond 2000) and land redistribution continues to be an issue of civic tension (James et al. 2005; Walker 2005). This government has tried to transform the badly planned apartheid townships and remodel urban centres like Johannesburg (Bonner 1995; Maylam 1995; Parnell and Mabin 1995; Bonner and Segal 1998; Beall et al. 2000; Lee 2005). Unfortunately the metropolis remains plagued with a high crime rate, unemployment, HIV/Aids, concentrated poverty and multiple social and political tensions that civic administrators seem unable to manage (Beall et al. 2002; Tomlinson et al. 2003; Mbembe and Nutall 2004a).

After the 1976 Soweto riots schools were no longer places of learning but of political strife and the streets were zones of hostility (Maylam 1995). The education debates generally centre on: the reformation of the education system (Ginn 1996; Kallaway 1997; Nkabinde 1997; Hartshorne 1999; Fedderke et al. 2000); re-structuring higher education institutions (Cloete and Bunting 2000; Cloete 2002); the impact of poverty (Blanc and Lloyd 1995; Witwer 1997; Hertz 2001; Taylor et al. 2003); HIV/Aids (Daniel et al. 2003; Horton 2006); and multilingualism (Heugh et al. 1995; Heugh 2000) in education.

The continued political corruption, which the ANC find difficult to admit, has led to a lack of civic trust in the government (Beall et al. 2005; Hyslop 2005). Black

economic empowerment (BEE), its problematic implementation and the corruption associated with it has led to heightened social tension (Marais 2001; Lodge 2002). Renewed militarism, vigilantism²¹ and the changing nature of policing, including the growing lucrative private security industry have received significant research attention (Brewer 1994; Brogden and Shearing 1997; Kopel and Friedman 1997; Beall et al. 2000; Jensen and Buur 2004; Bangstad 2005; Cock 2005; Samara 2005). Behind this lies a discourse that merges immorality, poverty and violence in which street children are criminalized (Samara 2005) and vigilante groups herald themselves as the restorers of morality in communities (Buur and Jensen 2004). After the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and in light of heightened criminality an intense debate on criminal justice has dominated South African studies (Wilson 1999; Braithwaite 2000; Daly 2002; Gibson 2002; Rouche 2002; Comaroff and Comaroff 2004;).

The nation's 'fragile stability' has also been amplified by the ANC's single-party dominance and Mbeki's premiership (Beall et al. 2005; Butler 2005a). A key concern amongst both left and right wing critics is the lack of political opposition to both the ANC and Mbeki (see for example the diverse opinions in these edited volumes Southall 2001; Jacobs and Calland 2002; Daniel et al. 2003). Resistance is unlikely to come from the black middle class who have benefited from the government's policies, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) who are in alliance with the ANC, or from the too small white minority (Southall 2001; Bond 2000; Lodge 2002; Myburgh 2004).

²¹ For example PAGAD (People Against Gangsterism and Drug) in Cape Town and Mapogo a Mathamaga in the Limpopo province. Both were established in 1996.

The working or unemployed have suffered the negative effects of the government's administration and they therefore form the most critical political opposition (Nürnberger 1999). In many municipal areas civic groups have formed to voice their concerns about the inadequate housing, water and electrical supplies (Mbembe 2004; Simone 2004). But South Africa lacks a culture of civic society where ideas of general interest can be shared autonomously and publicly (Marais 2001; Mbembe 2001: 39). The role and impact of trade unions, civic action groups and social movements has been a growing topic of debate in the New South Africa; it is generally argued that the political climate of civic action needs to be strengthened (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Crocker 2000; Torkington 2000; Wood 2000; Southall 2001; Mattes 2002; Mhone and Edigheji 2003; Sparks 2003; Walker 2005). Social movements need to be (re)built if the positive political gains made with the ending of apartheid are to meet the basic needs of all citizens (Fine 2003: 573; Ballard et. al. 2005).

Mbeki has led the country with perplexing inconsistencies in strategies and politics and seems to lack a true vision or ideology according to the contributors to *Thabo Mbeki's World* (Jacobs and Calland 2002). Lodge (2002) on the other hand argues that Mbeki's ideology is three pronged: the will for an African rebirth, a mistrust of established hierarchies of knowledge and a conviction of the pervasive prejudice of the West. The bases for these ideas seem to be born in his experiences of apartheid racism and exile (Sparks 2003).

Race and racism

David Goldberg's definition of 'racism' is 'the irrational (or prejudicial) belief in or practice of differentiating population groups on the basis of their phenotypical characteristics, and the hierarchical ordering of the racial groups so distinguished as superior and inferior' (Goldberg 1993: 81). The term 'race' has a problematic history from the nineteenth century social Darwinism through Eugenics and socio-biology which 'justified' a racial hierarchy placing white European men at the pinnacle and black African women at the base (Myrdal 1944; William 1973; Bannister 1979; Montagu 1980; Kenan 1996; Stepan 2002). During the twentieth century scientists found that the phenotypical differences between people were literally skin deep.

Currently race is studied from three paradigms. First interactionism explores how race is deployed in everyday life by social actors in their social interactions and judgements about the allocation of resources (Park 1950; Rex 1983; Miles 1989; Miles 1993; Miles 2000). Some argue that 'the belief in race has been – and still is – a powerful force' (Cashmore and Troyna 1990: 32), which is real (Guibernau 1996) or at least socially constructed (Dolby 2000) and shapes political mobilization (Solomos and Back 1996; 2000). Others, particularly feminists, contend that race like gender is a social construct (Davis 1982; Simms and Malveaux 1986; Collins 1989a; hooks 1990; Ware 1992; Mama 1995; Afary 1997; Mullings 1997; Collins 2000; Frankenberg 2000; hooks 2000). The second position, questions the ontological status of race categories, how race is an element within discourses, a mode of signification and representation from which established social identities and differences are often drawn (Gilroy 1987;

Alexander 1996; Gilroy 1996; Hall and de Gay 1996; Carby 1998; Craib 1998; Appiah 2000; Du Bois 2000; Gilroy 2000; Hall 2000). In different ways these positions explored the relationship between race, gender and class (Lindsay 1980; Davis 1982; Collins 1989a; hooks 1992; Ware 1992; Mama 1995; Morgan 1997; Mullings 1997; Arndt 2000; Collins 2000; Frankenberg 2000; hooks 2000; Alcoff and Mendieta 2003). Third, critical realism argues that race is not real but an ideological construct that 'like all cultural system items, have the capacity to escape the clutches of their originators and acquire an autonomy as denizens of the cultural system' (Carter 2000: 5).

Amongst liberal South African scholarship the focus on race has been from a broadly neo-Marxist perspective that divided society between oppressor and the oppressed – white and black (Cobley 1990; Lodge and Nasson 1991; Limb 1993; Crankshaw 1997; Fredrickson 1997) and a post-structuralist theory of the 'other' (Bozzoli 1991; Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; Norval 1996; van Onselen 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997). Contemporary explorations have tried to weave these two views together exploring the layered complexity of race and racism in South Africa (Ross 1999; Lester 2000; Maylam 2001). Recent historical and sociological inquiry has recognised the social construction of 'whiteness' (Lipsitz 1998; Dolby 2000; Dyer 2000), the intraracial tensions within this group (Klausen 2004: 8) and the dual meaning of white in South Africa where locally this racial group is no longer influential but is part of a global category that is privileged (Dolby 2001). In the New South Africa the racially driven politics of Mbeki has been largely down played by many commentators (Mathebe 2001; Jacobs and Calland 2002; Lodge 2002; Myburgh 2004: 318).

Culture and identity

Mbeki's presidency has been marked by his commitment to an 'African Renaissance' and an 'Africanization' of South African culture²². This has become a narrower form of African nationalism aimed at empowering the historically disadvantaged, rather than Mandela's focus on reconciliation and inclusion (Daniel et al. 2003: 3). The notion of Africa as an idea, a space, an academic object of study, a public discourse or an identity has been and remains fraught (Mbembe and Nutall 2004b: 348). The complexities of this go beyond the paradigm laid out by Saïd (1978) in his notions of Orient and Occident. This raises several questions. What does it mean to be African? How to think about Africa? And what is its meaningful place/ contribution in/ to the global village? (But see Eboussi-Boulaga 1981; Mazrui 1984; Mudimbe 1988; Asante and Asante 1990; Appiah 1992; Wiredu 1996; Appiah 2000; Mbembe 2001 who have been wrestling with these questions). Mbeki has tried to make his mark by establishing his 'Africanization' project as an alternative modernity in which he combines new economic and political technology with old, real or imaginary, African values and traditions (Cheru 2002: xii; Greenstein 2003: 19).

Inspired by Steve Biko and Black Consciousness²³, South African black culture was expressed in poetry, the 'Soweto novel'²⁴, art and theatre which all became

²² Note there are three broad tendencies within the African Renaissance debate – globalism, Pan-Africanism, and culture, Maloka & Roux (2000). Africanization is also linked to Pan-African tendencies and culture but is more nationalistic. Mbeki is trying to negotiate a nation-building exercise within a broader global – Pan-African agenda.

²³ Black Consciousness 'realised that a demoralised people with no confidence or pride in their forebears, capabilities or achievements could never carry out a successful revolution' (Mzamane 1991: 185).

²⁴ Born after the 1976 Soweto Riots, this genre of novel moved away from the more simplistic story line with subtle political overtones, to a more structurally complex story, which was political

the critical registers in which protest, solidarity, black pride and empowerment could be voiced (Mzamane 1991: 192; Welsh 2000). After 1976 this culture was largely a youth resistance movement in a climate of interrupted schooling, disrupted family life, broken social cohesion, and during the 1980s, endemic violence (Pityana et al. 1991: 4-5). But this was also a culturally creative time particularly in places like Soweto where new fashions, music styles and sub-cultures were born (Bonner and Segal 1998; Attwell 2005).

In the New South Africa the repressive, collective, political culture of resistance has been at least partly replaced by a new culture of individualism, material wealth and hedonistic self-enjoyment. Urban reinvention has been reworked with township trends influenced by America, Europe and African traditional culture to create new expressions like Kwaito and the Generation Y culture that currently dominate the media, music and fashion industries (James 1999; Laden 2001; Nuttall 2004; Coplan 2005). Understanding cultural shifts has been highlighted as key in appreciating the broader socio-economic capital of individuals, groups or nations (Bourdieu 1986; Bourdieu 1989; Appadurai 1996; Putnam 2000). In South Africa culture has been identified as important in individual capacity building especially helping people to develop a sense of aspiration (Appadurai 2002). But this is something that has remained under-researched and the insights of these theorists have not been applied in-depth to South Africa.

Part of the cultural revolution has been the intense politicisation of sexuality such that sexuality has become a symbolic expression of political and social freedom,

direct and confrontational. There were no real heroes or individuals in these stories as all was consumed by the political ethic of greatest good for the vast majority.

with deadly consequences in the form of the HIV/Aids endemic (Posel 2005). The general discourse of South African culture has been largely overshadowed by the pressing analysis of the HIV/Aids crisis (Albertyn and Hassim 2004). It was estimated that 12% of the population (5.4 million people) had HIV/Aids and the infection rate amongst pregnant women was 26.5% in October 2002 when the most recent survey was conducted (Horton 2006)²⁵. Research into HIV/Aids looks at the socio-economic impact of the disease and an economics of care (Arndt and Lewis 2000; Arndt and Lewis 2001; Grant and Palmire 2003; Nattrass 2003; STATSSA 2005; Horton 2006; Urdang 2006). Medical care provided by the State for HIV/Aids patients and the government's official discourse that cautious preventions rather than unsustainable and inadequate anti-retroviral treatment, has raised much debate in South Africa creating a climate of mistrust in the government (Butler 2005b; Kalichman et al. 2005; Leclerc-Madlala 2005; Posel 2005). Research points to the ongoing spread because of inadequate political support to provide aid and multiple social obstacles in the implementation of prevention and intervention programmes (Pettifor et al. 2001; Campbell 2003; Sideris 2004; Posel 2005; Cochrane 2006).

HIV/Aids and sexual violence have become the new site of social struggle and 'suggest an unacknowledged gender civil war' (Moffett 2006: 129). South Africa has one of the highest rape incidents, and the horror of child and adult rape has become banal in a society where sexual violence has become an everyday event

²⁵ The average life expectancy of adults between 15 and 49 years has dropped from 64 years in 1994 to 49 years in 2001. Up to 40% of all deaths amongst adults between 15 and 49 years are due to Aids. The United Nations estimated that there were 700,000 Aids orphans in 2001 and that in 2003 150,000 children were orphaned due to Aids related deaths. Amongst pregnant women between 15 and 19 the HIV/Aids infection rate dropped in 2003 while it continued to increase in all other age groups, Horton (2006).

(Ford 2004; du Toit 2005; Posel 2005: 133). This has meant that the constraining effects of culture and economic vulnerability in women's lives have been left largely unchallenged (Gouws 2005: 8). An environment of rapid social change and 'normalised' violence not only affects the culture but also the individual identities that people shape for themselves in this environment.

Identity means various things according to different theoretical perspectives.

It can mean a psychological sense of "who am I", a sociological notion of a person qua agent prior to assuming specific social roles, a Foucauldian concept that captures an array of regulating practices that produce the internal coherence of the subject, a philosophical concern with the individuation and unity of a person in the face of change, or a narrative construction the individual develops to make sense of his or her life (Hawkesworth 1997: 656).

In order to establish a sense of control over all the multiple changes and forces in their lives and future, the modern subject can engage in an ongoing reflexive process of personal narrative construction (Giddens 1990; 1991). Central to this is a 'crisis of identity' as rapid social change and globalization undermine old stabilities. This has given rise to intense fragmentation and de-centralization of individual identity (Hall 1995: 595-6). In this world of flux identity is enormously powerful because it is the source of meaning (Giddens 1991; Castells 1997). This theory offers the important awareness of identity dislocation and the power of identity. In South Africa where the meaning of racial groups and gender has been so radically altered this is theoretically important. But two central

problems arise when trying to apply these theories to South Africa. One, South Africa is not a neat modern or traditional society but a complex mix of both. Second, there is an implicit sense that the individuals will have the cultural capital to create their own sense of identity such that this identity is the source of meaning in their lives. For people stripped of various forms of capital and self-value this is a problematic project (for a detailed theoretical critique of these ideas see Jenkins 1996; Craib 1998).

More generally this post-modern theoretical position conflates the 'I' and the 'me'. It is suggested that there is no such thing as an essential identity, and any identification with belonging based for example on race, class or gender is fleetingly constructed (Hall 2000). In our identities there is a flux of sameness and difference but however much we may try to reinvent ourselves it is still the same 'I' - 'at least – an identity with several identities'(Craib 1998: 7). Individual identity is not created in isolation but in a dialectic relationship with society such that they are continually influencing, shaping and validating each other (Jenkins 1996). 'All human identities are in some sense . . . social identities' (Jenkins 1996: 4). Where the social has radically changed or is changing there must also be a change in individual identity; this Jenkins (1996) maintains is not limited to modernity alone.

In constructing identity, which goes beyond the social roles people play (Castells 1997: 6-7), individuals align themselves with groups (Park 1994), buy certain things (Campbell 1987; Stearns 2001), eat various food types (Cusack 2003; Nuttall 2004) and interact in particular places (Hetherington 1998). In South

Africa far more work needs to be done on the identity formation particular within the contexts of specific groups like religious organisations, social movements, trade unions and the corporate environment. One group of women who are experience a high level of identity change are women in South Africa.

Women in the New South Africa

The unbanning of liberation movements saw the collapse of many autonomous women's movements that had played key roles during the struggle (Lapchick and Urdang 1982; Walker 1982; Ramphela 1997; Geisler 2000). The Women's National Coalition (WNC) was created as a political voice for women but has lacked the strong leadership of earlier women's movements (Geisler 2000; Hassim 2002). Affirmative Action policies have tended to favour white women and black men more than black women (Human 1996; Bowmaker-Falconer et al. 1997; Casale 2004; Mathur-Helm 2004). In the formal sector racially biased opportunities for white and Indian women and disadvantages for black and coloured women have overshadowed gender obstacles (Marks 1994; Walker 2003; Mathur-Helm 2004). Constitutionally South Africa is one of the most gender equal countries in the world with a 29.8% representation of women in Parliament (Mathur-Helm 2004: 336). Abortion has been legalised and women with no/ below minimum incomes are eligible for State child support grants. These steps have been achieved because of strong lobbies and reconfigured women's movements that campaign against the gendered nature of poverty, violence, lack of health care and education (INSTRAW 2000; Marks 2000; Chirwa and Khoza 2005; Gouws 2005: 3; Britton 2006). All these have hindered women from taking full advantage of their rights enshrined in the new constitution

(Cheater and Gaidzanwa 1996; Baden, et. al. 1999; May 2000; Geisler 2004; Walsh 2006).

Women still bear the overwhelming responsibility for childcare often raising children without support from fathers. The lack of childcare facilities hampers women from entering the public sphere or exercising a greater degree of agency within the political and economic arena (Campbell 1990; Goldblatt 2005; Gouws 2005; Banda 2006). Feminist scholars argue that motherhood mobilizes women and motherism²⁶ can develop into female and feminist consciousness whereby women begin to become politically active and challenge their limited public roles (Gaitskell and Kimble 1982; Walker 1982; Gaitskell 1983b; Gaitskell and Unterhalter 1989; Walker 1990; Fester 2005). This argument does not help to open a space for women who are not mothers and it continues to define women according to reproduction. Most of the recent debates on women's mobilization focus on civic social movements and fail to take religious groups into account.

Comparatively little research has been done specifically on women and Christianity in South Africa. Theological studies, (Amoah and Oduyoye 1988; Oduyoye and Kanyoro 1992; Haddad 1996; Kanyoro and Njorogoe 1996; Oduyoye 2001) have grappled with poverty, patriarchy and a fading African culture. In South Africa theologians have paid particular attention to the interlocking dimensions of post-apartheid racism, sexism, oppression, classism, and African culture, which influence African-South African women (Masenya 1997; Ackerman and al 2000; Njoroge and Dube 2001; Phiri et al. 2002; Rakoczy

²⁶Temma Kaplan (1992; 1997) uses this term to describe how motherhood can evolve into a female and feminist consciousness.

IHM 2004). This theology has not directly influenced the pastors at His People or Grace Bible church. Historical studies of women and missionaries included both white and black women and the impact of the mission station in their lives (Bowie et al. 1993; Moss 1999). Women in contemporary Christian organisations, most African Independent Churches (West 1975: 99 – 118; Anderson and Pillay 1997; Scarnecchia 1997) and Manyano groups, black women's prayer groups in mainline churches (most notable Gaitskell 1997; Haddad 2002) have highlighted the importance of the social networks these groups offer. In South Africa to date there has been no published work on professional women in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches, nor has there been any work that specifically looks at women, their faith and their secular jobs.

Religion in South Africa

The most active site of research is within the field of history where there is an attempt to show that religious ideas were often a bridge between cultures, which swiftly became intertwined (Elbourne 2002). This is also part of the ongoing project examining the 'incomprehensible paradox' of Christianity's acceptance, as the religion of the oppressor, in Africa and the Africanization of Christianity (Hastings 1994; Isichei 1995; Dube and West 2000; Sundkler and Steed 2000). Building on the Comaroff's (1985; 1991; 1993; 1997) thesis that AICs were not apolitical but sites of resistance, and the growing support for oral history to capture the imbrication of stories from the struggle there has been focused attention on trying to grasp the experiences of Christians both with the mainline churches and AIC (Walshe 1991; Denis et al. 1999; Muller 1999; Coplan 2003; Heuser 2005). This is part of a larger project giving voice to those who were

silenced during apartheid (Nixon 1994; Coombas 2003; Heuser 2005) and re-writing the history of the liberation struggle (Ramphela 1997; Lester 2000; Maylam 2001; Freund 2002; Attwell 2005).

Since 1990 there has been a dramatic increase in witchcraft accusation. This is attributed to the increasingly uneven distribution of wealth, the breakdown of community, heightened violence and the ambiguous legal and cultural position witchcraft now occupies (Niehaus et al. 2002; Jensen and Buur 2004). Research needs to explain how PCC churches in urban areas are dealing with this phenomenon.

Of the South African Christians, roughly 8% belong to Classical and PCC type churches and over 30% belong to AIC²⁷. There are three major threads in the research into Pentecostalism in South Africa. The majority of the work investigates the history and character of different Pentecostal churches (Oosthuisen 1975; De Wet 1989; Pillay 1991; Watt 1991; Anderson and Pillay 1997; Daniels 1998; Gorman 1998; Anderson 2000;). A second branch tries to argue (often unconvincingly) for the anti-apartheid position that these seemingly apolitical churches took up (De Wet 1989; Walker 1990; de Kock 1996; Horn 1998; Anderson 2000; Anderson 2001a). The least researched area has been to explore the socio-economic impact of these churches (Garner 2000). None of this

²⁷ No detailed analysis of the religious demographics have been done since the exploration of the 1996 census results which showed that 76% of the population were Christian, 0.01% belonged to African Traditional Religions, 1.4% were Hindu, 0.2% identified themselves as Jewish, 1.4% indicated Muslim, 11.7% said no religion and 9.4% did not answer the question. The Christian group were divided as follows: Zion Christian 11%, Pentecostal/Charismatic 8%, Catholic 7%, Methodist 7%, Dutch Reformed 7%, Anglican 4%, other Christian 36%, the vast majority of which were from African Independent Churches (STATSSA 2000).

research explores the position of women in these churches, the churches' engagement with Africanization or globalization.

Religion, culture and politics have been closely linked in South Africa (Chidester 1991; Haleencreutz and Palmberg 1991; Chidester 1992; Elpick and Davenport 1997; Walshe 1997). A significant gap in the research on South Africa is the role that religions are playing within the NGO sector (but see Haddad 1998; Haddad 2001a; Haddad 2001b; Germond 2001; Cochrane 2006) or their involvement in civic action groups. This is part of a larger study that needs to explore the new identity that AICs and mainline churches as well as Hinduism and Islam are taking now that they are no longer bastions or resisters of apartheid.

Conclusion

Much of the scholarship reviewed here details the confusing course of the establishment of the New South Africa but there has been little in-depth critical analysis of the new government (but see for example Glaser 2001). This may be because the majority of work continues to try and offer a positive outcome for South Africa and so shies away from harsh criticism (but see for example Bond 2000).

Within contemporary gender studies class and race, and their intersection with gender, are highlighted but most of them disregard religion. They often present a universal perspective of gender either for a class or racial group but pay little or no attention to variations within these groups. There are multiple institutionalisations of gender and they occur within different settings such as

religion, commerce, medical professions and media. The social meaning and roles of gender and families vary (Hays 1996). In South Africa, where the social experience of different generations is markedly varied, generation is an important social variable. Generational variability is overlooked in much of the contemporary research on gender.

In conclusion five areas need urgent investigation. First, there are no qualitative studies that analyse the experiences of young women from historically disadvantaged backgrounds who are working in professional occupations in South Africa. Second, no gender sensitive studies on PCC in South Africa have been published and only two studies on PCC women in Africa have been published (Mate 2002; Newell 2005). Third, PCC and the family have only been investigated in relation to the value that Pentecostals place on nuclear family structures (Maxwell 1998; Meyer 1998b). Fourth, in the re-construction of the meaning of 'Africa' (Mbembe 2001) the role that religion is playing in this process needs to be reflected on with a greater sensitivity to the languages being used in these churches and the worlds they symbolise (but note Gifford 2004a and Maxwell 2005 who have begun to do this). Finally, a comprehensive study of 'Africanization' needs to engage with Christianity and Islam (see for example Mazrui 1984). This study will therefore fill some of these gaps and contribute to our understanding of religion in contemporary Africa and the experiences of professional women in South Africa.

Chapter 3

Strategies and Methods

My initial interest in this research project was born out of my experience lecturing in Religious Studies at the University of the Witwatersrand in 1999 and 2000. I was particularly interested in establishing a better understanding of the working and social experiences of young professional women from previously disadvantaged backgrounds. At the same time, my MA in Pentecostal research in South Africa and work in Christian youth programmes had made me aware that Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity (PCC) was beginning to spread in South Africa. I wanted to understand how and why these churches were growing and what role they saw for the church in post-apartheid South Africa. In this section I will establish my central hypothesis, outline my research project, detail the process of my data collection and explain how I analysed the data I gathered.

Hypothesis

In my study I focused on two PCC churches, His People Church, a racially mixed church and Grace Bible Church, a black church, both of which were established in the early 1980's and were located in Johannesburg and Soweto respectively. My central hypothesis was that some young, urban, professional women in South Africa were attracted to PCC churches because these organisations helped them to develop personal identities and negotiate the contemporary networks of social, political and economic power. It was this hypothesised association between a particular set of socio-economic and cultural conditions and participation in particular churches that was the focus of my investigation. It was a 'working

hypothesis' in the sense of serving as a guide to my research design, questions and methods (Marsh and Rossman 1995). It was not logically derived from a set of theoretical assumptions and initial conditions but was arrived at on the basis of personal observation, background reading and research for my MA in PCC churches in Gauteng. In other words, it was an 'informed hunch'; and it invited empirical investigation (Bryman 1999).

In order to explore this central hypothesis my study had 6 main research objectives:

1. To expand a historical conceptualisation of Pentecostalism which could accommodate the most recent form of PCC to emerge in South Africa.
2. To explore the interrelation between identity formation, socio-economic, political, cultural, community and kinship practices – showing how these churches offered their members ways of managing the contemporary networks of social power.
3. To discuss the extent to which these churches were shaping their own African Christian identity that drew on secular/popular cultural and African, Western and Christian religious and cultural systems.
4. To study the impact, in the lives of some female members, of the various types of formal and informal social development projects, which these churches were engaged in.
5. To examine the particular role and experience of professional women in these churches and how their church membership had in any way

shaped their identities, benefited them materially or affected their social practices at work or in the family.

6. To determine the ideals of motherhood and family structure that these churches advocated and how members negotiated this ideology in their own lives.

More specific research questions are specified on pages 67-68 below.

Rationale

The principal reason for my research project was to fill some gaps in the existing literature and to conduct an empirical investigation of His People Church and Grace Bible Church, on which there had been no published research to date. The findings of this research were expected to strengthen the sociological understanding of one of the world's most expansive expressions of Christianity in South Africa. By examining the leadership and communication skills training which these churches offered, my research was intended to help evaluate how this sort of community work could be beneficial to participants.

These churches attracted young students who went on to professional jobs. In studying the beliefs as well as the social, economic, political and cultural practices of the church members my research has thrown some light on a religious subgroup within an emerging group of young professional South African women. My findings are amongst the first to report on the first generation of historically disadvantaged, female professionals in South Africa. The study not only examines the experiences of these women in the corporate arena but also in the

home. My research helps to expand our knowledge of the ideals of motherhood and family that are gaining popularity in South Africa.

Outline of the Research Design

Choosing Churches

I chose to study His People and Grace Bible Churches for the following reasons:

1. They had the same 'theology of purpose', conservative teaching of female submission, and upheld intense mothering and the nuclear family as Christian ideals.
2. Both churches used high-tech audiovisual systems, had the same general church structures and similar links to churches in North America. All their sermons were in English, yet they tried to include African languages through isiZulu and isiSotho²⁸ songs. They were approximately the same age - His People was established in 1982 and Grace Bible church was established in 1983. In 2000 both churches moved onto land they purchased and began to build permanent church structures.
3. Both churches appealed to young upwardly mobile professionals as well as to the underemployed, disadvantaged and those on the margins of society.
4. The churches also had several differences. His People was led predominantly by white people and was situated in one of the previously white suburbs, yet 60% of the church membership was black. Grace Bible Church in Soweto, was led and made-up solely of black people. His People recruited most of its members from university campuses while

²⁸ The correct way to refer to the object 'Zulu' or 'Sotho' as in a language or culture is with the prefix 'isi' and when referring to a group of isiZulu speakers to prefix with 'ama' meaning people.

Grace Bible Church tried to attract members from the community around it.

5. No published research had been done on either church.
6. Grace Bible Church had become a landmark of African success in Soweto and some tourists visit the church on day trips around the township. Both Grace Bible Church and His People were regarded as churches associated with prestige, attracting influential and well known people in business, media and politics.

The similarities and differences between these churches made it possible to do meaningful comparative work.

Research Methods

In order to gather information relevant to my working hypothesis, I engaged in participant observation and conducted in-depth interviews (see appendix 3 for the detailed questionnaire I used as a guide in the interviews) with individuals and focus groups. I chose this qualitative approach because it allowed me to develop a thick description of these communities letting the important issues come to the surface (Burgess 1982). This was preferable to an approach where I might impose my own ideas onto the lives of the women in my selected churches. Most women were happy to meet one-on-one with me but the students found this a little intimidating and so I arranged to meet them in focus groups in order to keep a balance of power between myself as the researcher and the interviewees (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Homan 1991). The focus groups had the benefit of allowing the students to validate or disagree with each other; and this sparked off interesting debates. In addition, I collected background and

contextual information from a variety of written sources including church publications, research reports and publications, local newspapers, sermons, discussion groups and training sessions. These written sources were supplemented by the notes that I made during and after my participation in church activities as diverse as counselling sessions, worship services and 'home cell group' meetings. Finally, in order to establish a basic demographic profile of the women I was meeting I compiled a structured self-completion questionnaire (see appendix 2), which I gave to the women and men who participated in my in-depth case studies. This questionnaire enabled me to establish a profile of the respondents in both churches.

Gaining access

Before beginning my research I obtained permission to join the churches by conducting initial interviews with the senior pastor's wife in both churches. These were the people who were directly involved in the ministries to women. I emailed both women an outline of my research, explaining why I was interested in working on their church and adding a short biography. Obtaining access to His People was not difficult. As I was a Christian they were happy to help me with my research. I explained that I would like to give them feedback on my findings at the end, and they were particularly interested in this. The head pastor's wife gave me the names of a few professional women in the church and these became the gate keepers who put me in touch with other women. My sample therefore grew like a rolling snowball but remained confined to women who belonged to the socio-economic categories in which I was primarily interested. I decided on the numbers of women I interviewed at each church when I realised that I was

beginning to see patterns emerge in their responses and hearing the same stories repeated. This indicated to me that I had a large enough representative sample to make generalisations for the group as a whole.

At Grace Bible Church I had far more difficulty getting access. For the first three months the head pastor's wife and her team of volunteer women who oversaw the women's ministry did not want me to come and do research. The women were suspicious of a white researcher coming into the church asking questions. While interviewing a member of His People I happened to mention that I was struggling to get access to Grace Bible Church. She said that she knew the head pastor's wife and that she had found our meetings helpful. On my behalf she spoke to the senior pastor's wife, Pastor Gege. A few days later Pastor Gege returned my call and gave me access to the church. Through my contact at His People I was able to meet up with two women at Grace Bible Church who became my main gate keepers and enable me to acquire a purposive, snowball sample of informants. I had wanted to analyse the church buildings, clothes and music of the churches but both churches did not want me to take photographs of members or to record their music. They were quite happy for me to buy copies of the taped Sunday sermons. This means that I only have a few photographs of both churches.

My sample consisted of 43 professional women, see the tables in appendix 1. With each woman I had two, hour and a half long interviews. I also had 5 students whom I interviewed as a focus group and met with twice. To contrast the findings of the professional women I interviewed 6 non-professional women in a one off focus group and 7 men. I held two focus group meetings, each with 3 men

and interviewed the 7th man individually. The focus group meetings all lasted 2 hours. In addition I had 10 informal meetings with 4 women from His People and 3 women from Grace Bible church, with whom I had already had in-depth interviews and who invited me to meet with them socially.

A 'snapshot' of members of His People

At His People the women had a higher level of tertiary education than at Grace Bible Church as this church had active student networks on the university campuses in South Africa. His People in Johannesburg had a membership of 2,000 people, of whom 40% were men and 60% women. A third of the members were students. In my sample of women I tried to reflect this demographic. I interviewed 12 professional women from historically disadvantaged backgrounds, 4 historically disadvantaged students, 7 white professional women and 3 men. Of the 23 women 7 were mothers, 2 of them were stay-at-home-moms, 2 worked part-time and 3 worked full-time. Of the 19 working women, 5 had their own businesses. Appendix 1 tables 3 - 6 shows in more detail the average age, earnings and marital status of the women of the men and women in both churches.

The women and men were all randomly chosen but fulfilled the criteria of being members of the church, having a tertiary degree and having worked in a professional career. I became friends with some of the women and during the time of my study they began to invite me to social functions. I attended the morning and evening services, one of the bible study courses at their Bible School, counselling courses, women's events, the business people's network and a home cell group. In total I spent four and a half months in this church.

A 'snapshot' of members of Grace Bible Church

Once I was given access to Grace Bible Church I travelled into Soweto and attended 2 of the three morning services every Sunday for the four and a half months of my research. I also made friends with some of my informants and was invited to social functions with them. I would not take my tape recorder to these occasions but would write up detailed notes when I returned home (Denzin and Lincoln 2000). As it was dangerous to travel alone in Soweto, particularly after dark, I did not attend as many home cell meetings and all night vigils as I would have liked. For a similar reason and because of work commitments, only a minority of the women in my sample from Grace Bible Church attended home cell meetings at this church in comparison to His People where all the women I interviewed attended home cell meetings. At Grace Bible Church it was far more important for women to attend the alternate Saturday leadership meetings if they were in any way involved in a ministry in the church and to go to conferences; so I attended these meetings.

There were just over 8, 000 official members at Grace Bible Church in 2004, the year that I worked in the church. I interviewed 20 women with tertiary degrees who worked in professional jobs, 2 women who worked in professional jobs but had not finished their degrees, 3 women who had no tertiary degrees and worked in clerical jobs and 6 women who had not completed school and were either unemployed or worked in semi/unskilled jobs. I also interviewed 3 professional men who all had tertiary degrees and were all working. This enabled me to make comparisons between professional women and non-professional women. Of the professional women 9 were mothers and all worked full time. None of the women

had their own businesses although over a third of them aspired to start their own companies. Tables 7 – 9, in appendix 1, show in more detail the average age, earning and marital status of the women and men.

An unexpected interruption

I began my research in June 2003 and had been working at His People for 6 weeks when I became ill. Due to my illness my fieldwork was put on hold until the end of November when I returned to His People. After 4 weeks I had another relapse and had to suspend my research until January 2004 when I returned to the field and completed my research with His People. In March I began my fieldwork with Grace Bible Church and in mid July 2004 I returned to England. This unintended interruption had two positive unexpected benefits. I was able to do longitudinal research with informants at His People. Having met all the professional women within the first 6 weeks, I then met them again in between November 2003 and February 2004. Three women left His People in this period and were prepared to talk to me about their reasons for leaving, giving me invaluable information about some of the reasons for attrition in these churches.

In African culture illness is understood in very different terms from Western culture. From an African perspective, if someone has had a serious illness, particularly something the medical profession have found difficult to diagnose, and the individual then recovers they are regarded as marked for something special by God (West 1975; Ndlovu 1993; Kiernan 1994; Scarnecchia 1997). As women told me their life stories and often shared harrowing tales of pain, illness, loss and abuse - I shared with them something of my own life history, which

included an unusual experience of chronic ill health (Harding 1994; Roberts 1990). Once women heard about my own suffering they began to see me in a totally different light. One of the key concepts around 'Africanness' for these women was suffering. By having suffered with an illness that could not swiftly be operated on or immediately cured, I moved out of the category of pampered white girl into the category of African; I knew what it was to suffer. I discovered that one of the key things women told each other about me when they phoned their friends to say that they had passed on their names to me, was that I had understanding and compassion. I knew what suffering meant.

While the racial difference was almost always an initial barrier, it was overcome to various degrees when I explained to women that I wanted to hear their stories to help me to become more effective as a teacher and compassionate as a South African. There has been much debate in the literature about cross racial research, and several scholars believe that it is not possible (Collins 1989b; hooks 2000). Others argue that while 'whites cannot fully comprehend the experiential consequences of racism, we do experience the transmission of racist ideas and formulas' (Back 1993: 220). In a country where white people have muzzled the voice of others a project, which redresses that imbalance could be one small step to righting this wrong. While as a white woman I could not understand all the complexity of a black woman's life, I believe that the only way for our country to get beyond the destruction of apartheid is for inter-racial exchange and cross cultural learning. This, together with my basic understanding of isiZulu, made me acceptable and trustworthy to them. Women found the process of telling their stories empowering because they felt that, by sharing with a white person, who

was willing to listen, we were engaging in the process of building a new South Africa. When I asked women to reflect on the process of our interviews they almost all said that they had found it helpful to talk about their experiences and encouraging that a white person was prepared to listen to them.

Having grown up in South Africa and having spent more time in rural areas and townships than most white South Africans I did have a good basic idea of the context of my research, but the townships and world of black people remained largely separate from that of white people. This made me a stranger in the field able to see with fresh eyes (Neuman 2000: 355). Padfield and Procter (1996) found that in their research amongst women the informants gave more information to the female interviewer than to the male interviewer, suggesting that same sex interviews may be more effective for in-depth research. This does not mean that research across gender lines cannot elicit important information; but it suggests that cross gender research needs to take into account power dynamics that are not at play in same sex research (Back 1993: 224). Having the same, gender and marital status - and being roughly the same age - as the majority of women in my study, made it easier to build a rapport with them. Marriage was considered an important status within these churches and by not being married I was less threatening than if I had been married.

I have outlined the personal bias, gender, racial, religious and generational position that I brought to this research. I was aware that interviewees also projected onto me their own stereotypical ideals and feelings based on my race,

gender, age and marital status (see Song and Parker 1995 for a more detailed account of this).

The women all knew that my research was for a PhD thesis and that I was therefore a student. I explained to them that I wanted to learn about their lives, work, church and family relations, positioning myself as nonthreatening and willing to be taught (Neuman 2000: 359-60 discusses the importance of this to break down unhelpful power dynamics). As working women, who had completed their studies and were earning money, they felt equal to me and often superior.

Research questions

My study will be guided by the following research questions, all of which have bearing on my working hypothesis:

1. How is personal and collective identity shaped and created by His People and Grace Bible churches?
2. What sort of identity do the members of these churches take on, and how does that affect their social, political, economic, cultural, ideological and kinship practices and interactions?
3. What forms of social power do these churches use, and how do they relate to the networks of contemporary social power?
4. Who belongs to these churches and why?
5. What economic practices, political views, inter-personal and inter-family relationships and work ethic do people take on when they identify themselves with these churches?

6. What development work do these churches do? Why? Who does it? Who benefits from it?
7. What is the basic theology of these churches? To what extent do they emphasise their theological distinctiveness, and how does their theology impact on the identities that individuals and the communities take on?
8. What sort of emerging black middle class can be found in these churches, and are there specific factors that account for this?
9. What roles do women perform in these churches?

In appendix 2 and 3 I have included the questionnaire and schedule of topics that I followed when interviewing women. I used a tape recorder to record our conversations and transcribed the interviews afterwards. The specific demographic questionnaire was developed before I began my interviews. The schedule open-ended questionnaire (appendix 3) was developed after my first 5 initial interviews, which gave me a sense of the issues that were most important to women. Throughout the process I kept a research diary in which I noted key issues that had come up in each interview, and by transcribing the first interviews I had with each woman before I met her for a second time, I was able to pick up on issues that I felt needed to be followed up. The second interviews were extremely important as they gave me an opportunity to reflect with the women on the first interview and to verify that I had understood what they were saying, as well as to go into more detail on issues that seemed important to them. I also found that most women felt more comfortable with me at our second meeting and so opened up more. In the first interview I asked women for a brief life history and covered the main questions. In the second interview I went into more detail

on specific questions. Life stories are usually regarded as unreliable factual reproductions of the past (Bryman 1999; Neuman 2000). I chose to use them because

(a) life story is subject to the individual's selection of events, and there is a tendency to produce continuity through a selective memory. Rather than being a weakness, however, this might also be their strength, because the errors, myths, and inventions lead us beyond facts to their meanings. Therefore, life stories are particularly useful in studies of religious world-views (Furseth 2005: 160).

Reflecting on the interviews and making detailed notes of my experience became an important part of the process for me as I heard heart breaking stories of neglect, violence and abuse. Driving through Soweto and being invited into people's homes to conduct interviews was often a painful reminder of the dire poverty and need in South Africa.

Women from Grace Bible Church generally preferred to meet me in their homes after work or over the weekend. Those who lived in Soweto were very impressed that I was willing to come into the township and that I found my way to their houses. Making the effort as a white person to come into the township helped to win their trust and respect before the meeting had even started.

At His People there was a completely different dynamic and most women wanted to meet me after work or for breakfast in a coffee shop in one of the Malls close to where they worked. Only after I had become friends with some of the women whom I interviewed did they invite me to their homes. These differences were

bound up with their relationship to African and or Western culture, and I will analyse this in far more detail later in the thesis.

Analysing data

After transcribing all the interviews and sermons I used the Atlas-ti computer package to code and analyse my data. Atlas-ti is a comprehensive package that allows detailed groupings of trends enabling the researcher to create various levels of sub-sets within a thematic group. A single word or idea can be recoded multiple times either alone or as part of a larger concept. Using Atlas-ti I was able to keep the interview data and the sermon data separate and later integrate them to see how often ideas from the sermons emerged in the daily discourse of the women. I was also able to set up a systematic method to identify and analyse the concepts that were important to the women in my study, how these were presented and what impact they were said to have on the various areas of their life. I was able to identify the frequency with which certain ideas were repeated by one informant, or all the informants. Atlas-ti forces the researcher to think in terms of research links and inter-related sets of ideas. This is an advantage but can also be a disadvantage if the researcher only relies on the data interpretation from Atlas-ti. What I found was that some important ideas and themes were expressed by only one individual. If I had relied only on Atlas-ti these concepts would have been lost because they were not repetitive nor did they fit into the broader categories, but they were important largely because they were exceptions (Silverman 2001).

I collected and transcribed all the data using Atlas-ti as a tool while not being completely reliant on it because I was aware of the contexts of quotes. Understanding the contexts was essential in helping me to reduce the risk of decontextualising the data. There is a risk that Atlas-ti can break the flow of data, especially the rapport between informants in a focus group or between interviewee and interviewer. Where I noticed that important interchanges in both verbal and non-verbal communication had taken place I noted this in my fieldwork diary and have included these in my overall analysis. In trying to understand the context of my selected churches and the lives of the women I met I made good use of Atlas-ti but was aware of its limitations and supplemented this with my own broad study of the material.

During the process of my fieldwork I had three stages of verification and reflection. The first was to transcribe the first interview with each woman and pick up the key themes of what she said and did not say. At our second meeting I would reflect on what she had said and ask her if she agreed with my summary. This was often a time in which I was able to determine how the informant was stereotyping me and answering my questions in a way that she thought I wanted to hear or would put her into the best light (Miles and Huberman 1994; Silverman 2001). During the process more generally I met with a few women from both churches who had themselves been asking in informal ways similar questions to the ones I was asking. I spoke to these women about my findings more generally and asked them to comment on what I was thinking. These sessions were invaluable to my overall understanding of both churches as they took place towards the end of my fieldwork when these women had developed a real interest

in my work and trust in me. Both churches were keen to learn from my research and I gave a presentation to the leadership of both churches on my findings. This was an opportunity for me to give something back to the churches but also for us all to reflect on my findings.

Analysing the language used in sermons, church conferences, meetings, music and in the interviews was a central part of this process. This analysis focused primarily on the spoken word, transcribed into a written form. There is no neutral language of representation (Atkinson 1990: 175) and in this study the problem was further complicated by the use of multiple languages. All the interviews and sermons were in English, but the informants and preachers often slipped into African words or phases, which I have included in my analysis. People also used English words in ways particular to the South African context, and I have accounted for this in my analysis. Within each church community there were also specific words and symbols that were particular to this sub-culture. Understanding this meaning was often the key to appreciating concepts and ideals common to the group (Neuman 2000: 362).

Ethical and practical considerations

In my research I followed the guidelines laid out by the British Sociological Association and recommendations raised in debates on research ethics (Homan 1991; Miles 1991; Bryman 1999; Neuman 2000). I asked permission to conduct my research from the church leaders and the members. With members I renegotiated consent at every meeting. I gave and maintained confidentiality and anonymity throughout my study. In this thesis I have used pseudonyms and made

no direct references to the companies where these women work in order to protect their privacy. I wrote up a clear statement of the purpose of my research to ensure that people understood what it was about. At the end of the fieldwork I gave the church leaders a presentation of my findings and asked them to give me their feedback. Through the use of focus groups and by giving something of my own history I tried to balance the power, status and trust between the interviewees and myself.

During the course of the project I tried to reflect on and write up my own personal bias that may have affected the project. I was aware that for myself, and the people I interviewed these sessions were both emotionally draining and uplifting experiences. I tried to be sensitive to these issues and if I had felt an interviewee was particularly vulnerable I would have alerted one of the pastors to give her support. Visiting Soweto and driving to meetings at night did present a personal risk, and I did limit my attendance at meetings because of this danger. Grace Bible Church and His People were keen to write up a history of their churches and through my research I have helped them begin these projects.

What was not included

In this thesis I have tried to remain focused on the experiences of work, family and religion in the lives of the women I studied. This has meant that much of the information, which I gathered has not been analysed directly in this thesis. For example, I could have given a far more detailed examination of the structure of the churches, the specific development projects that they do amongst the marginalized and underemployed and the impact of the church on the

communities around them. For this thesis I did analyse the music, sermons, magazines and church literature but will not be referring to them in any depth. This material is important and I hope to return to it in more detail in my further research. I will also outline the reasons why three women I interviewed left His People. This material was very rich but because it does not contribute directly to my main thesis I will return to it at a later stage. My research was primarily centred on previously disadvantaged women, and I only refer to contrasts with previously advantaged women in passing. A comparison between these two groups could also shed light on the changing social patterns in South Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Chapter 4

His People Christian Ministries

Raising the Leaders of Africa

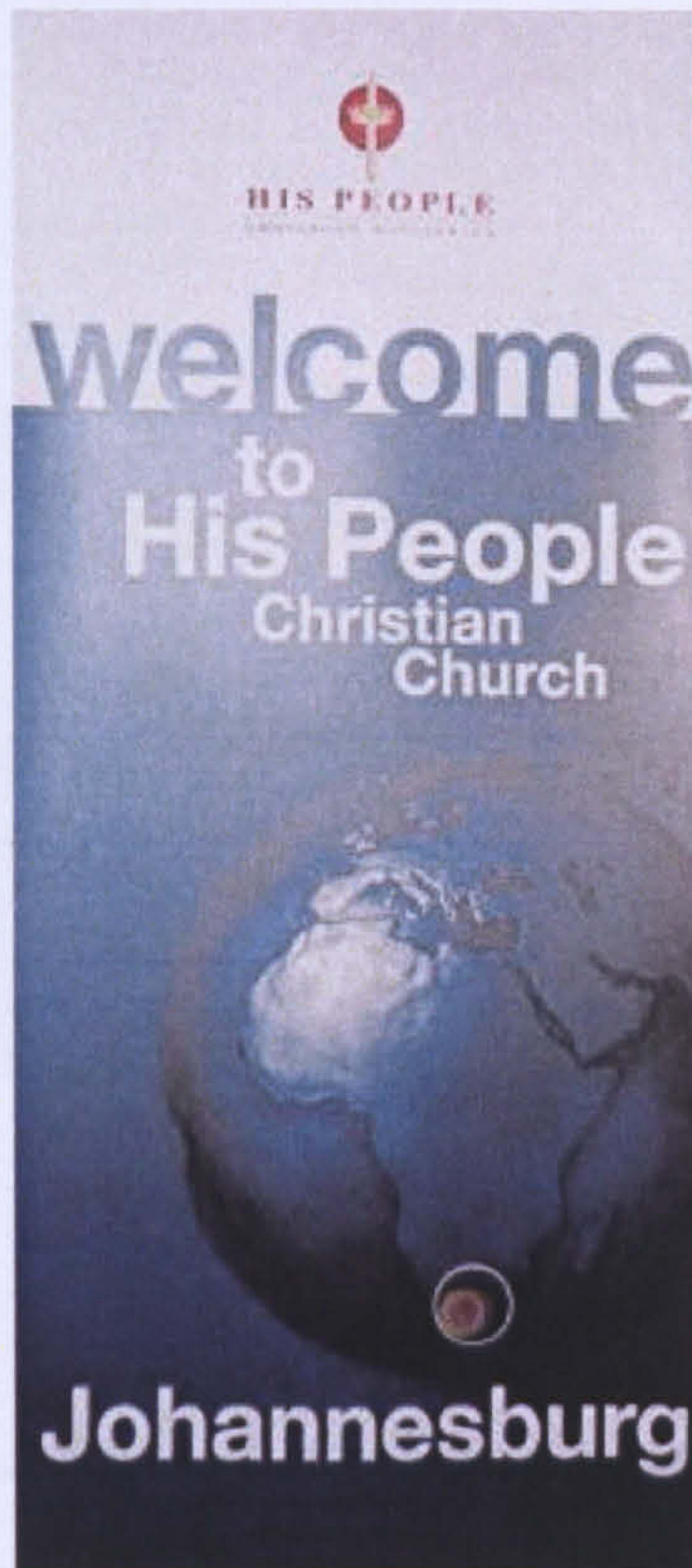


Figure 4.1 His People Church banner

Introduction

His People Christian Ministries church in Johannesburg (His People) was an elegant three story stone building tucked behind a six-foot wall, electric fence and old oak trees in one of the previously white suburbs of Johannesburg. On my first visit I missed the entrance because the church wall blended unobtrusively with the high walls of the houses around the church. The church entrance was on a busy main road leading to Rosebank, one of the three commercial centres in

Johannesburg, and I only saw the church signboard as I drove past. There has been no published research on or history of His People and so this thesis will be the first work of this kind.



Figure 4.2 Entrance to His People Church

In this chapter I will give an outline of the history of the church, its structure, a typical service, the activities and leadership of the church and the theology of the pastors. This discussion will be limited to the following tasks that engage with the five central debates of my thesis. 1) examine the feminization/ masculinization of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity (PCC); 2) show how churches help members develop social and culture capital; 3) explore the ideals of motherhood and nuclear family expounded in the sermons and meetings; 4) highlight how these churches negotiate Africanization and global consumer products; and 5) explore the ways in which the church provided space and guidance for women to (re)shape their identities.

Background to His People Christian Ministries

His People Christian Ministries was founded in 1983 by Paul Daniels on the Cape Town University (UCT) campus. His vision was to start a church that focused on evangelising students, who, he believed, were particularly open to conversion and would take Christian principles into the work place. His vision was to raise up a generation of Christian leaders who would impact society by implementing conservative Christian values in the government, corporate, medical, educational and municipal structures of South Africa. In order to equip these future leaders with cultural capital²⁹ and a grounding in Christianity he set up a Bible School and tried to encourage all members to attend the three year part-time course. In 2004 there were 26 His People Christian Ministries and Bible Schools on campuses in 9 nations across the world.

As His People grew they linked up with other churches in different cities. In 1987 in Johannesburg the fledgling His People linked up with Maranatha, a small church led by the American pastors Bill and Connie Bennot. Bill Bennot became the head pastor of the new Johannesburg His People, which met in a school hall near to the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). All the His People churches fall within the Morning Star International body of churches. In 1997 His People had a membership of about 1,000 people and merged with another community church called Living Word, which had a membership of just over 400 people. Living Word brought the resources of a slightly older, almost all white and economically stronger congregation to the largely student His People body. The merger made it possible for the church to buy land and build a modern church

²⁹ I am referring to cultural capital as Bourdieu (1986) understood it. In industry this would be referred to as soft-skills training for example, communication, leadership, self-motivation and time management.

complex with seating for about 1,500 people, a car park, conference facilities, counselling rooms, office space and a play area for children.

In 2002 and 2003, while I participated in the life of the church, the church was raising money to equip its conference and counselling rooms with furniture and technical facilities. About a third of the roughly 2, 000 His People members were students. Several of the working members had joined as students. The church's main services on Sundays were at 8:30 and 10:30 in the morning. In the evenings they had a 18:00 service at the church and 18:30 services on the two main university campuses – the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) Braamfontein campus and the University of Johannesburg (UJ) campus in Auckland Park where they were most active. The 18:00 service at the church appealed largely to the white 20 and 30 somethings, while the 18:30 services on the university campuses appealed to the students. The His People student body at Wits was entirely black while the student members at UJ were racially mixed. This reflected the demographics of residents at the two universities.

Like a well run business His People have a mission statement, which was:

To rebuild the nations of Africa under the Lordship of Christ by winning campuses and communities to Jesus, discipling each believer and releasing every leader for service in all walks of life.

They also had a brand slogan: 'Saving the lost, loving the saved, releasing leader', together with a very particular corporate image used to present all their media communication. They had a bi-monthly magazine where they detailed all their different ministries, events, staff and volunteer contact details, and mission

statement. The magazine was modern, up beat, and used contemporary corporate words, layout and ideas.

In 2004 the church expressed their five core values as: 1) to ensure that in everything they did they recognised the Lordship of Christ, 2) evangelise all people, 3) disciple all those who had been saved, 4) develop the leadership skills and potential of all their members, and 5) put the needs of the family before worldly success.

His People preached a conservative moral message. They had no direct ties to any political organisation, and members were far more involved in business than politics. They believed that by changing the business world they could change South Africa. This was largely born out of the political and economic climate in South Africa where people felt that only by bringing about economic growth and stability could political stability be maintained (Daniel et al. 2003; Noble et al. 2004; Sparks 2003). A major focus of His People was to inspire economic growth and stability. This was reflected in their teaching, branding and the activities of the church. They have not always been so economically orientated. During the last years of apartheid they rallied to oppose the government, and the symbol of His People designed during this time reflected their interracial commitment - two hands linked together in prayer, one black the other white.

The structure of the church building

His People church was a large three storey rectangular building with no outward religious signs. Two large wooden doors opened onto a spacious tiled foyer. Along the right hand wall were colourful posters detailing various missions in

Africa and Asia and forthcoming events. There were also 3 tables with volunteers selling a small range of Christian books and the tapes of the sermons. At the end of the foyer space was a small kitchen with serving hatch.



Figure 4.3 Side entrance of His People with fence around the church.

Moving further into the building the tiles gave way to a carpet that marked the entry into the 'church' or seated space. The layout was in the style of a conference auditorium with plush blue chairs sloping gently down to the stage at the far end of the church opposite the foyer. The chairs formed a diamond fanning out from the stage, which was the focal point. At the rear of the stage was the baptismal pool. This was normally covered by floorboards, which were removed when there was a baptism service twice a year. The church believed in adult baptism and full immersion. There were no religious symbols on the walls but on the western wall there was a long banner depicting the heads of a pride of lions. Above the lions was the logo for His People. Opposite the stage was a boxed-in multimedia control centre. From here all the powerpoint projections for the songs, sound levels of the band and speakers, lighting and multimedia video presentations were controlled. The church believed that to be relevant to a

multimedia generation they had to present their message through a variety of media ranging from short commercial style videos for upcoming events through to mini documentaries or films presented instead of a sermon or to illustrate a point.



Figure 4.4 Inside seating and stage of His People

Just off from the stage was a door that led to counselling rooms. Here the pastors met new members for tea between the two Sunday morning services. Anyone who wanted prayer or had given their life to God at the end of a service was ushered into one of the counselling rooms where people, trained by the church as counsellors, spoke to them and prayed for them. Their contact details were taken and they were phoned the following week to encourage them to come again.

Above the ground floor were two further storeys. On the second floor was a large meeting area specifically for youth. Here they had their own church services on Sunday mornings, weekday evening youth meetings and social events. On the third floor were the conference rooms, and a bookshop was planned. By the time I completed my fieldwork at the end of January 2004 they were half way through

their project of furnishing these two floors. Outside the church building was a small house where young children met during the Sunday morning services for Hiz Tots and Hiz Kidz. They had a play area, many helpers and lots of toys.

The church building was situated on two plots of land in one of the previously white suburbs of Johannesburg on the intersection of two roads. Opposite the church were a few shops, restaurants, cafes and flats. The houses on the original site had not been destroyed. One was used for the children's church and the other as the church office. The rest of the land was converted into a car park that could accommodate just over 150 cars.

During the week the office was the hub of the church. Here the receptionist and pastors had their offices, a kitchen, counselling and small meeting rooms. Several young people, did a gap year working for the church helping with administration and organising various conferences. His People believe that in order for Christians to become strong and remain committed to their faith they need to spend as much time as possible with other Christians, learning about their faith and developing strong friendships that will keep them within the fold. The church buildings were the support structure for this work.

A typical His People service

At the door I was greeted by friendly ushers who welcomed people and handed out the church magazine. Before the service the band played worship songs creating a warm atmosphere and people gathered in small groups greeting friends. People were free to sit anywhere except the front row, which was reserved for the

pastors, their wives and any guest speakers. The row just behind them was generally reserved for the elders and their families.



Figure 4.5 The car park outside His People church

Clothing and appearance were important signifiers in this community. The ushers all wore matching waistcoats in Ndebele style prints and the band wore colour coordinated shirts and slacks. The pastors normally wore suits and ties but over the time of my research Pastor Bill Bennot began wearing more open-necked or collared sports shirts with slacks. The female pastors were all well groomed in fashionable clothes. They believed that as Christians they should look successful, contemporary and dynamic. They had developed a style of church power dressing in which high-street fashion was re-coded to symbolize spiritual success. Material wealth was equated with God's blessing, and an aspiration to excellence was regarded as the mark of a dedicated Christian life. This upmarket Western image was popular amongst the students and most of the congregation. But a few, mainly white members, had a more arty-cum-hippie look reminiscent of Classical Pentecostals.

Ten minutes into an average service 95% of the people had arrived. Every service followed the same pattern. They began with upbeat praise songs and then progressed to quieter more worshipful songs. Each song was repeated at least 3 times. Of the 5 or 6 songs sung, only 1 or 2 would not be in English. The musical director explained that as English was the one language everyone understood it was their policy not to favour African languages in case they alienated people who did not understand them.

While the worship leader encouraged people to be led by the Spirit, the whole service had been carefully planned in advance and there were no spontaneous diversions from this schedule. During the time of worship people were encouraged to pray in tongues and come forward if they had a word or vision for the congregation – but this rarely happened. The first songs were generally upbeat praise songs that re-affirmed God's character as a praiseworthy God who provided for his people. In these songs people re-affirmed their faith. The music then became more pleading and the songs asked God for forgiveness letting people come into God's presence. Through these songs people broke with the negative elements of their lives and their past. Once again the music changed and become more worshipful. Through these songs the congregation were encouraged to re-commit themselves to God and pray for the things that troubled them. In songs they brought their illness and anxieties to God.

Griffith (1997: 76) showed in her study of Evangelical women in America that in prayer and worship

a person's sense that God listens to her, cares about her sufferings, and delivers her from pain gives birth to a distinct sense of self-awareness, the feeling of discovering a self that was lost or receiving a new self in place of one that was "dead".

The words of the songs encouraged people to claim the blessings God desired to bestow on Christians and to see themselves as already having what they were praying for. Greenhouse (1986: 90) observed that 'prayer mobilizes and actualises an individuality that would otherwise be ambivalent'. Prayer, worship and song were used to take the participants on a specific, carefully planned, spiritual journey in which they were given space and guidance to re-affirm or re-shape their identities.

The time of praise and worship was followed by notices and a welcome extended to visitors in at least 5 of the country's 11 official languages. In this process the individual members become drawn into a united body - a people with common interests and goals. After this one of the pastors or elders gave a 5 minute sermon on why Christians should be tithing at least 10% of their monthly salary to the church, and where possible giving extra for the multiple projects the church was running. After this sermon there was usually a musical performance while the ushers went round with baskets for people to put their tithes into.

These preliminaries took 40 minutes and led up to the main event – the sermon, which lasted another 40 minutes. On average during 2003 Pastor Bennot (the head pastor) preached at about 60% of the morning services and 20% of the evening services. The remaining sermons were preached by the other pastors, visiting American preachers and occasionally a South African pastor from a

church with a similar theology to His People e.g. Rhema. The tone and style of all the preachers was the same and mirrored motivational speakers. They encouraged audience participation by telling people to repeat key verses or phrases after them and delighted in having important points punctuated with an 'Amen' or 'Hallelujah' from the congregation. Clip-on microphones enabled them to roam energetically across the stage entertaining audiences. Many people took notes and most people came to church armed with a bible, notebook and pen. About 90% of the sermons I heard were preached by men.

The congregation was inspired to understand themselves not just as men and women - but as holy people set apart by God with a purpose, talents and powers. They were given practical instructive teaching showing them how to embrace a model Christian life, in which they should work hard, improve their interpersonal skills, manage their money effectively and resist worldly temptations. The sermons were also aimed at giving people a place in which they could let go of their pain and anxieties and where they could re-establish themselves as a people of confidence able to overcome the hardships of life.

There seem to be three reasons for the corporate motivational style of the church. The first was the dominant influence of popular North American Christian literature on the leadership and church membership. Much of this literature was first developed for the business world and then redesigned to fit a Christian paradigm. Best selling books like Rick Warren's *'The Purpose Driven Life'* (2002) have taken the principles of popular motivational psychology and re-read scripture showing how these precepts apply to Christians. Second, this style

echoed the rhetoric of corporate culture. Cameron (1991) argued that Christianity spread quickly through the Roman Empire because it was presented in the genre of the popular heroic novel. Similarly the Christian message at His People was expressed in contemporary business language and idioms making it accessible to members' lives. Third, the content of the sermons centred on what the business world calls soft-skills development and what Bourdieu would call cultural capital. Apartheid systematically aimed to strip black people of any form of capital, and among the most difficult forms of capital for young black professionals to acquire have been social and cultural capital (Lester 2000; Appadurai 2002).

At the end of the sermon the preachers always had an altar call. This was a time when anyone who had been moved by the sermon, wanted to change their life, ask for forgiveness or dedicate their life to God, was given an opportunity to do so in a general, corporate prayer. After the sermon those with particular needs could go into one of the side rooms for prayer or pray with someone in the area in front of the stage.

All sermons and courses were presented in English. The women I interviewed all had English bibles and said they found it easier to read English than their mother tongue. Almost all the black women said they prayed both in their mother tongue and English depending on the situation they were in. Most of the time I heard people talking English amongst themselves and to their children. However, the common language did not mean there was fluid interracial integration. The students were mostly black and tended to keep to themselves. Amongst the

working people there were more interracial friendships but the women I interviewed felt it took a lot of effort to cross racial barriers.

The clothes, music, simple contemporary style of the building and language all spoke of a corporate image, in which a few select aspects of African culture were woven in. There was no in-depth engagement with African culture and traditions: rather, for most women a disassociation from them. In the following chapters I will explore this in more detail.

His People activities and leadership

At His People the leaders believed that Christians would grow in their faith by a) doing things that helped them learn more about God, the Bible and the Christian community, b) having a ministry - something that they did in service to others and, c) a circle of people who cared for them and whom they cared for. To achieve all this His People had a diverse range of activities and ministries that their members were encouraged to take part in. All of these were outlined in their magazine and made possible by the commitment of the pastors and lay leaders. The metaphor that best captured His People's management structure was concentric circles of power. I use this analogy because concentric circles give the impression of a flat structure: something that was transparent, where a hierarchy does not exist. But by participating in the life of the church I began to see that behind this apparently open flat structure was a sophisticated system of authority where the centre circle was the most powerful.

At the centre of the church was the team of elders and pastors who governed the church. Within this inner circle there was a further elite circle made up of some pastors and elders. This seemed to be partly borne out of the history of the church, where status was given to founding members and partly due to subtle theological differences within the inner circle. The elite circle had a strong sense of 'purpose theology' that suggested material success and happiness were realised in this world by fulfilling with excellence the purpose God had given each believer. The other circle was made up partly by members from the old Living Word Community church and members who have a more gentle pastoral approach. They also believe that all problems could be solved if individuals gave their life to God and lived out their purpose to the best of their ability, but they allow for the disappointments of life. For these pastors and elders the role of the church was also to help people cope with the difficulties and failures of life.

The pastoral leadership was 80% white - only 2 full time ministerial staff and 3 self-supporting elders and pastors were black. The full time pastoral staff was made up of 6 men (5 white and 1 black) and 2 women (1 white and 1 black, neither of whom was married). The wives of the 5 white pastors all worked part time for the church and were considered equal pastors with their husbands. Pastors were well paid in comparison to ministers in mainline churches.³⁰ The church also had 10 (4 white men, 3 black men and 3 white women) unpaid or self-supporting pastors and elders who worked full time in secular jobs and did pastoral work, preaching and teaching in their spare time. The reason for the low

³⁰B. Wilson (1959) showed that Pentecostal ministers up to the 1950s were poorly paid and had little education in comparison to their Church of England colleagues. In South Africa the PCC pastors were better paid and had as good an education as mainline ministers, affording them equal status.

number of black staff, according to the white senior pastor I interviewed, was that the black members were not coming forward for ordination because their parents expected them to get well paid secular jobs and support their extended family.

The second official circle of influence was made up of the leaders of all the different organisations the church ran. Some of these leaders were pastors or elders; others were not. The third circle was made up of people who led sections within a larger organisation, for example the area home cell leaders. The fourth circle consisted of those who led a small sub-section within an organisation, for example the leader of a home cell. Some people fulfilled more than one role and so fell within several circles.

The different organisations within the church were:

- ***Home Cells***

These were small groups gathering in the home of the cell/group leader. Most home cells started with coffee and a chance for people to catch-up on each other's news. After a short time of worship, the main focus of the evening was a discussion of a book or section of scripture. The sessions ended with a time of prayer in which the members prayed for each other's needs.

- ***Campus Student Cells***

There were a number of cell groups on 4 tertiary campuses in Johannesburg³¹ where the church was active. Campus Cells were just like home cells except that they took place in the student dormitories and were led by students.

- ***Campus Ministries***

On each campus there was a full time pastor or campus director who oversaw the church's ministry and evangelism to students. Their activities included Sunday night services on the Wits and UJ campuses, yearly leadership training courses on the campuses for students and a Forty Days of Purpose course. This focused on helping students find the purpose of their lives and equipped them with life skills. They also ran a 'Champions for Christ' evangelism outreach specifically to sports students.

- ***His People Bible School***

The Bible School has been the backbone of His People Christian Ministries. The material for the three year part-time course is produced by Cape Town His People church. In Johannesburg they had a team of 7 part-time teachers and a full time administrator. They ran a school one evening a week on the Wits and UJ campuses and one morning a week at the church. The focus of the courses was not classical Biblical Studies but rather to address issues as varied as discipleship, what 'blood covenant'

³¹ The University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), the old Wits Education Campus; the Johannesburg based University of Johannesburg (UJ) campuses.

meant, cross-cultural relations, public speaking, leadership, an in-depth understanding of the Bible and an overview of angels, demons and the power of the Holy Spirit. The students attended lectures once a week for three hours and wrote an exam at the end of the year. The course could also be taken electronically via the internet.

- ***Creative Arts Ministry***

There were 10 different sections within this organisation. Most of them focused on music and drama, and aimed to enhance the worship in the church.

- ***Business Network***

The network met once a month and aimed to equip young entrepreneurs, and provide support for those employed in business. This group strongly emphasised mentoring. It had a start-up fund which provided fledgling businesses with expertise and some financial support. It was headed by one of the self-supporting pastors who managed his own company. 'God's calling far extends the walls of our church and homes – it requires us to fulfil His mighty plan in the marketplace as well' (Business Network email newsletter, 4 February 2005). The network also had a specific mentoring programme for women in business helping them to break through the glass ceiling and balance the demands of family and work.

- ***Missions***

His People had invested considerable resources in establishing churches and developing outreach programmes to students in Africa and Asia. They worked alongside existing ministries to help them set up Christian groups and bible schools on college campuses.

- ***Youth Ministry***

Teenagers were important to this church and it provided weekly youth cells, social events and youth services at the morning services. 'Switchvert' was their youth outreach programme, and included extreme adventures, one night camps, social dinners and monthly big group events. The 'Green Room' was a Sunday evening service for teenagers in which they used a variety of media and arts to communicate with young people. Connected with the Green Room was a bi-weekly email that kept members up to date with events.

- ***Children's Ministry***

His People believed that the earlier a person was exposed to the gospel the more likely he or she would be to live a purposeful and prosperous life in God. They had an extensive team of people who helped out with the children's ministry. Every Sunday His Totz looked after pre-school children during the morning services. Hiz Kids ran during the Sunday morning services and taught primary school children the main bible stories. At the same time Hiz Diziples, for children between 11 and 13 years, taught them the basics of the Christian faith. The children's

ministry 'endeavours to assist parents with their responsibility to train their children in Godly principles.' (His People Magazine, 2004, vol 2: 4). To this end they ran parenting skills programmes teaching parents how to raise their children in a disciplined 'Godly' manner.

- *Subway 2030*

Marriage was central at His People and they encouraged all adults to be married. To help young adults socialise they provided an informal space where married and single people in their 20's and 30's could meet. Activities included formal dinners, hiking, sports, theatre outings and 'Spill the Beans' - a coffee bar set-up after the evening service.

- *Women's Ministry*

The aim of this group was to meet the needs of women in the church by providing women with support, fellowship and encouragement to fulfil their destinies. They hosted 4 Saturday events throughout the year and encouraged women to link into smaller groups where they could mentor and support each other. The focus of this group was to explore what it meant to be a Christian woman, a Godly wife and dedicated mother. Most of the programmes tried to help women find their own purpose and identity in life.

In the corporate, masculine language of the motivational sermons, the women's ministry offered a place in which the language and focus was more feminine. It was a place in which women who were stay-at-home-

mothers were validated in their role and women who worked were given a place to express their desire to be home-makers. At these conferences the ideal of intense mothering and the nuclear family were continually expressed, and women were shown how to achieve (or at least strive for) these ideals.

- ***Counselling and Prayer Ministries***

The prayer ministry team held a variety of prayer meetings throughout the week and various special prayer events. There was an email address and phone number that people could contact if they had special prayer requests. The church tried to help people by providing lay Christian counsellors trained by the church through the various counselling courses they ran. These people were not meant to replace professional counsellors but to offer prayer and biblical based guidance to people in distress. The church believed contemporary society was so unhappy, with high divorce rates, because social values were wrong. To ‘correct this’ the church provided various courses including pre-engagement, engagement, marriage, parenting, divorce and life-style management courses ‘teaching’ people how to live more effective and contented lives according to Godly principles.

- ***Masiphane***

Masiphane in isiZulu means ‘let us give to each other’ and was the compassionate ministry of the church. They were partners with the Khaysweni Children’s village helping children with homework and raising

funds for the home. They worked with the Rosebank Homeless project, run by a number churches in the area. In association with the Gauteng Department of Health they ran a programme training people to give home-based care to HIV/Aids sufferers. A group of members went to prisons teaching inmates biblical, social and leadership skills so that they could be prepared for rejoining society.

Outline of His People theology

The key word that came up in almost all sermons was ‘purpose’, and in my interviews women spoke about finding their ‘purpose’. His People focused on a gospel of ‘purpose’ rather than just having faith that prosperity would miraculously materialise. They emphasised that once a believer had found her purpose she would find the vision for her life and know what she should be doing. A believer who has found her purpose would be doing God’s will and therefore what she did would be successful and ultimately also profitable. The position of the church was summed up by one of the female leaders.

In the Word God called people and then he had a job for people to do. And I feel that people find their purpose when they find meaning to their lives and are equipped. God calls everyone to a job and a purpose and we need to help them find that once they are saved, (Beverly, 30, M, proprietor advertising company, H.P.).

While purpose was central in the His People theology there was tension about the interpretation of what purpose led to. Some people felt that it led to financial rewards, while others maintained that it led to a fulfilled life, which might or might not be financially rewarding. They all agreed that purpose did lead out of

poverty to a life in which the basic material needs of the believer were met. This tension was evident in the inner and elite circles. The ‘financial blessings group’ was epitomised by two of the self-supporting senior pastors, who were multimillionaires in their early thirties and married to beautiful Christian women with lovely young children. They led the business network and embodied a theology of prosperity, which centred on finding your purpose, working hard and giving faithfully to God, believing that God would bless them materially. The belief was that if Christians did all these things God would bless them with material prosperity. With their high-end luxury cars and fine clothes they were regarded as the ideal amongst the young students and many other members.

The other group were pastoral in their approach and focused on purpose that led to a fulfilled life. They advocated involvement in community ministries and careers in teaching or helping professions rather than corporate jobs. They were the more compassionate voice within the church and tried to help people to balance work and family life. Central to both groups was the idea that God had a purpose for the Christian believer’s life.

At the beginning of 2004 when I was concluding my research at His People there was a marked change of tone in the church. The church had gone through a testing year as the head and founder of His People Christian Ministries, Paul Daniels, had confessed to adultery and gone to America for counselling. In the same year the company that the two young star pastors had started, faced bankruptcy. In January 2004 I heard both pastors preach that they were shaken by their experiences of financial difficulty and began to suggest that financial success was

not necessarily a marker of God's blessing and that, instead, family life was possibly the way in which God blessed people. At His People all the pastors looked for outward signs or symbols of inward sanctification.

The theology may have focused on 'purpose' during the time of my research but conversations with women who had been at the church for a number of years suggested that the church went through phases in which different concepts were fashionable. While 'purpose' was the buzz word during my time there, the wider theology of the church was rooted in a number of other concepts. Pastor Shippey said the church was reformed in theology, charismatic in the practice of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and evangelical in their mission to evangelise the world, (Ps Shippey, January 2004).

The pastors believed in the centrality of the gifts of the Spirits and baptism in the Holy Spirit was part of the conversion process of the Christian. They did not believe that conversion was confirmed by baptism in the Holy Spirit but that spiritual baptism usually followed a confession of the Lordship of Christ. In this they were largely influenced by C. Peter Wagner. Manifestation of the gifts of the Spirit was identified as the gift of tongues, health, prosperity and a stable family life. Outward signs of status and success were therefore sanctified and legitimated within the theology and practices of these churches as symbols of spiritual blessing.

Based on the teaching of Paul Daniels, the church founder, and Rice Brooks the leader of Morning Star International, of which His People were a member, they

believed that Christians were not just called to evangelise the world but to influence and shape how it was governed. Christians were called to make disciples of all nations, which they interpreted as converting nations to Christianity and ensuring that they were governed according to conservative Christian principles. In their theology the gospel not only meant salvation from sin but also the realisation that the believer was called to be a leader. Following Roberts (2003) and Ammerman (1997) the distinction between ‘otherworldly’ and ‘worldly’ was not helpful in a church like His People where the spiritual and the secular, the eschatological and political were blurred such that they inform each other. This blurring was a ‘testament to the inherent flexibility of conservative religious traditions’(Roberts 2003: 415; Griffith 1997; Manning 1999).

His People had also been influenced by the ‘Word of Faith’ movement and like other of these churches worldwide they had a strong emphasis on the bible, well trained pastors, and high numbers of the congregation attending their bible schools (see Coleman 2000; Hunt 2000 for more on the ‘Word of Faith’ movement worldwide). This made them similar to Rhema, the largest megachurch in South Africa. Gifford (2004a) has noted that in the PCC churches he studied in Ghana, interpreting the bible was an active process in which biblical narratives were made applicable to the contemporary reader. In much the same manner His People members were taught a conservative theology that glossed over the historical context of the bible and encouraged members to read the bible as a ‘direct message from God to them’.

Unlike Rhema and many other mega-churches His People tried to develop a leadership team and prevent the church revolving around one figure-head.

We have a different emphasis on leadership and a different leadership style. . .

Rhema is almost a personality cult. That is not here. We have different pastors and people are not here for one pastor, (Pastor Shippey January 2004).

People went to His People because the sermons inspired them to identify themselves as a chosen people, set apart by God, not divided by colour or class – a people who had already won the riches of this world and the next. They just had to step over from darkness into light, from poverty and illness into wealth and healing. This message was not characterised by millennialism but by a this-worldly focus that recognised salvation in this life. Here again there was a similarity with other African PCC churches (see for example Meyer 1999; Gifford 2004a; Maxwell 2005).

Conclusion

The language of the church was that of the masculine business world. Its theology focused on ‘purpose’, ‘achievement’ and ‘leadership’ – qualities of masculinity not femininity. In the following chapters I will tease this out in more detail showing how this church offered a masculinization of Christianity, not a feminization as Brusco (1986; 1995) has argued of Pentecostalism in Latin America.

In her book *God's Daughters*, Marie Griffith (1997) shows how Evangelical women convert a regular space into an exceptional space. Where they meet becomes

a “controlled environment” in which the ordinary is made extraordinary and the mundane blends with the mysterious, a performative setting where purposeful activities may be experienced as meaningful and powerful and transformation and healing may occur (Griffith 1997: 69).

In the ‘set apart space’ of their homes during home cell meetings and the conference rooms and auditorium of the church people met and found ways through the rituals, prayers, music and sermons to establish, and re-establish their identities as Christian women, wives and mothers. They felt strengthened and called to take up their role in the commercial world and play their part in leading others to create a Godly nation, divested of ‘suspicious’ African customs while maintaining a hint of African romantic ideals like community ‘ubuntu’ and warrior-leadership.

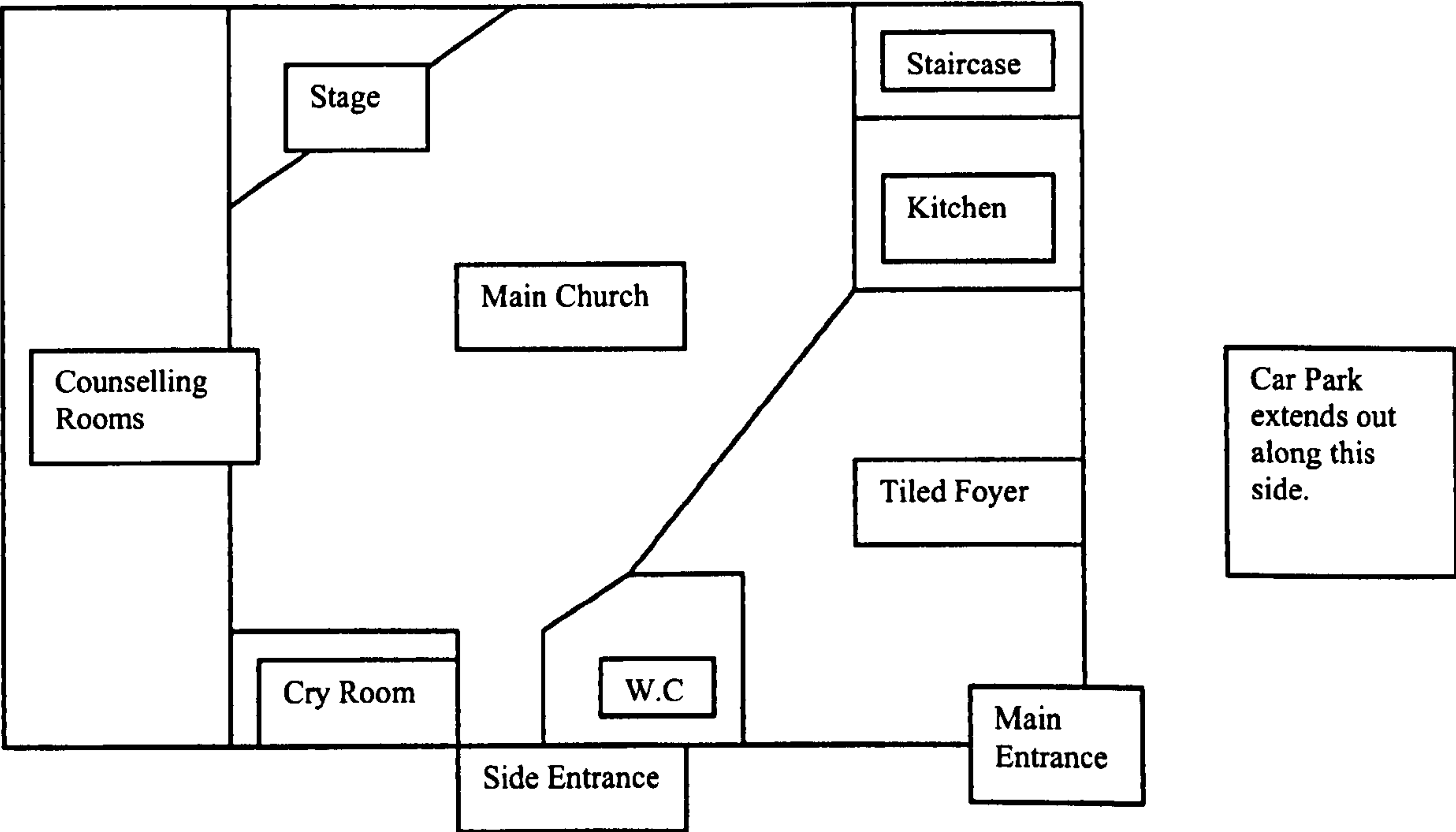


Figure 4. 6 Floor plan of His People church – not to scale

Chapter 5
Grace Bible Church
A Landmark in Soweto

Introduction

With some trepidation I got into my car on a warm March morning and drove down the highway heading towards the mine dumps and Soweto. Only a delicate veil of smog hung over the township and I had a far reaching view over the shanty huts, neat rows of houses and landmark buildings that all form part of the bustling, dangerous, colourful, and in 2004, remarkably clean township. As I drove worrying if I would find the church I did not realise that I was beginning a journey in which I would experience generous hospitality, heart breaking despair and see something of the exciting possibilities alive in South Africa ten years after our democracy began. With over 5,000 people I would dance and sing Shosholosa and Nkosi Sisilele Afrika for 15 minutes on the Sunday morning after South Africa won the bid for the 2010 soccer world cup. I would go to such diverse places as a shebeen in the depths of Zola, a dangerous, poverty stricken part of the old Soweto, and eat chicken feet in a beautiful 2 bathroom, 3 bedroom house in Protea Glen a new modern ‘suburb’ of Soweto.



Figure 5.1 Main entrance to Grace Bible church.

On that first morning I passed Baragwanath Hospital and then Vista university and knew that I still had a way to go before the left hand turn off to Grace Bible Church. Suddenly I was halted by a queue of cars all in the left hand lane. Not knowing how far Grace was I decided to stay in the lane and hoped that I would not be too late for the start of the service. As the queue inched forward I began to notice that there were a lot of people getting off at the taxi stops ahead of me. They were well dressed and most had bibles under their arms. I also noticed that there were many cars and pedestrians coming out of one of the side roads to my left. It seemed obvious that these people were going to and coming from church. I suspected there were several churches in this area. As I was carried along in the stream of cars I arrived at Grace Bible church and realised that all these people were converging on this one church. I was amazed at how quickly friendly parking assistants and security guards guided all the cars to parking spaces in the huge car park on the church grounds. Over the months I learnt that efficient organisation was one of the key features of this impressive church.



Figure 5.2 Security guard outside the gatehouse at the main entrance to the church.

In this chapter I will discuss the history, organisation and theology of Grace Bible Church in Soweto. This is the first such study as no published research has been conducted on the church. This chapter will establish the background for my thesis that explores how Grace provided a space for some young professional women to transform their identities into women who believed in themselves and became equipped to deal with the multiple networks of power in the New South Africa.

Background to Grace Bible Church

In 1980 Pastor Andre, a white man from Rhema Bible Church started an outreach church in Soweto. Moso Sono and his family became active members and Moso started to help with the youth ministry. The church met on Sundays in White City, Soweto in the Jabavu Community Hall. In 1983, with the heightened political violence, Rhema pulled out of Soweto. The fledgling church of just over a hundred members was handed to Moso Sono who had been studying at the Rhema Bible School.

The community renamed their church Grace Bible Church. This was the first major shift in the church. They were no longer the outreach mission of a white church, but a Soweto church run by the people for the people. Within the same year they had to move their venue from the Jabavu Hall to Isacson Primary school hall in White City. The change saw membership drop to around 30 people. Pastor Gege Sono (Pastor Sono's wife) said that it was unclear if the drop was due to a local, young, black man in whom they had little confidence leading them, or because many of the people attending the church were actually going to the community forum meetings held in the Jabavu Hall on Sunday afternoons. The church remained at Isacson Primary for almost 2 years and quickly began to grow. Soon the school hall was too small and they had to find a larger venue. The Church of Christ in White City had a larger hall and met for their services on Saturdays so the hall was free on Sundays. For a while this venue, which could hold 350 people, was large enough but by 1985 the hall had become too small. In 1985 there was heightened political conflict. Churches and funerals became the only lawful mass meeting places (Walshe 1997: 394). It was in this climate that Grace Bible Church began to establish itself, attracting young people back to church³². Pastor Sono preached lawful resistance, black consciousness and a Christianity relevant to the township. In the midst of the mayhem and murder this was a place of support for the dislocated and the suffering.

The venue became so cramped that people were standing outside and listening in through the windows. The leadership started to look around for another venue. In White City six classrooms of the Thlanwe School had been burned down by the

³² After the 1976 Soweto riots young black people began to leave the churches and argued that Christianity was the religion of the white man; a tool of white oppression just like industry and education, Walshe (1997: 385).

1976 riots. All that remained were a few pillars supporting a roof, but this venue was at least big enough to hold over 400 people. The church met here for much of 1985 and 1986 until the burnt schoolrooms were no longer large enough for the crowds. 'I think it was the seriousness of the church that really attracted people,' Pastor Gege said when she tried to explain the remarkable growth.

In 1986 the church moved to the Home Makers Fare Grounds in Jabavu, where they could seat 2,000 people. The 'building' was a concert floor with some iron pillars holding up the corrugated iron roof next to an open field. In summer it was very hot and in winter very cold. 'When we went there we were about 800 or so and it just grew and when we left in 2002, we were averaging about 4, 000 people who would attend, not membership' explained Pastor Gege.

The move to buy their own land and build their own church was the second major shift in the identity and culture of Grace Bible Church. For years the church had been collecting money to buy land and build a church. In 2002 the new Grace Bible church complex in Pimville was completed. The land and the building cost about R12 million (£1 million). The church had been able to raise R 7 million (£ 583, 333.00), through collections and investments. They still needed to raise another R 5 million (£ 416, 666.00). The large bank with which they had invested their money loaned them the extra R 5 million believing that it was making a good investment. Pastor Gege said that 'we wanted to build our own church, and we were offered sites, but they were all too small. And now with economic development our people are also driving cars and so we needed somewhere where they could park as well.' When I did my research the church seated 4,500 people

and there were plans to extend it to seat another 4,500 people. There was just enough parking but many people also come by taxis³³. The church had a membership of over 8,000 people and about 10,000 people attended the church on a Sunday. The completed church has become a landmark site in Soweto. It stands as a symbol of black success. They were a decentred people without a base who have evolved into a community with a place of their own. The story of the church building was of fragmentation and frailty coming together to create something solid and successful.

The structure of Grace Bible Church

Grace Bible Church had a green palisade fence along the front boundary with two large palisade gates. A simple fence ran along the remaining boundary of the church and a third gate at the far end of the car park offered an alternative exit. A vast open field functioned as the car park, networked with narrow brick roads and an army of friendly attendants who managed the heavy volume of traffic on a Sunday morning. The car park itself was a statement of the change that has taken place in South Africa. It was full of 4x4's, luxury sedans and trendy small cars.

One of the women I interviewed had just bought her first car - a black Peugeot 207, with cream leather seats. Instead of buying a cheap car when she started working she had saved her money and now that she could afford the monthly repayments on a trendy car she had bought her car. At Grace the women explained to me that people started spending money on luxury cars when they were thinking of moving out of the townships and buying a townhouse in the suburbs.

³³ Minibus vans managed by private individuals or companies that transport people along set routes throughout the country.



Figure 5.3 Cars parked outside the church during a Sunday morning service.

The church was situated on what was a huge open lot surrounded by rows of small 3 or 4 room houses. On Sunday mornings several people sat in their front yards, or just outside their yards and sold crisps, sweets, fruit, cool drinks and cakes to the passers by. On the open field just outside the church several women, some members of Grace, others not, set up small make shift stalls also hawking goods. The women did a lively trade before and after services and not just with children. Maxwell (1998: 355) noted a similar theology to 'prosper the church' and the people through a 'penny capitalism' encouraged by the church leaders. This was one of the ways in which the boundaries of the church and the community interflowed.



Figure 5.4 Sweet sellers outside the church.

The church itself was a huge hexagonal building. It was made of face brick³⁴ with a large modern corrugated iron roof that formed a sort of dome over the building. The exterior architecture had a feel similar to the Zone³⁵ in Rosebank. The roof was painted white and there were blue pillars that ran from the roof to the ground.



Figure 5.5 Main entrance doors to Grace Bible church.

³⁴ A red brick made in South Africa.

³⁵ One of the most trendy upmarket shopping complexes in Gauteng.

On the west side of the building were single-story classrooms that formed an 'L' shape facing in towards the church. On Sundays these were used for children's activities. During the week they were used to give HIV/Aids home care training, youth training workshops, sewing courses and entrepreneurial training programmes. On the east side of the church was the entrance to the offices. The main entrance to the church was on the south side but there were also several large wooden doors opening into the church on the eastern and western sides. There was a large notice at the entrance gate that read 'Grace Bible Church Soweto', otherwise there was no cross or outward sign that this was a church.



Figure 5.6 Sign at the main gate of the church.

The side doors led directly into the church but the main doors led into the foyer of the church, a large open tiled space. Opposite the entrance doors was a large wood panelled wall. As you walked into the foyer there was a bookshop to the right and a large wooden reception desk on the left. This reception desk was used as the information desk on Sundays and at conferences. A little further along to the side of the information desk were doors that led to the toilets, a large kitchen, conference rooms, training rooms, and a computer room with 20 computers used to teach computer literacy programmes to the community. From the foyer there were two doors that led into the church. When the church became too full the

wooden panelled wall was folded up and the foyer extended into the church. The various side doors could also be opened up and on occasions a marquee was erected on the western side of the church to extend it even further. The church itself was carpeted and had hundreds of rows of loose plastic chairs. The church space was shaped like an auditorium and two-thirds of the seating gently sloped down to the stage. On the stage there were microphones for the band, drums and keyboard, a podium, flowers and on the far right hand side three plush chairs on which the main preacher, the speaker giving the offertory message and the person giving the announcements sat. Above the stage was an electronic screen on which the words for the songs, notices and scripture verses were displayed. There was no cross, crucifix or any other religious symbol on the stage or in any part of the church. The centre front row was reserved for the pastors and elders. In the centre of the church was a small boxed-in area where the sound control engineer and word monitor sat.



Figure 5.7 Inside of Grace Bible church.

Once the enlargement of the church is completed they plan to build an entertainment complex. This will include a large hall for youth activities and a youth church on Sundays. There will also be a gym, cafés, and fast food outlets. The aim of this expansion is to make the church a social meeting point for young people in the township. Grace sees itself not set-apart from the community but being in the centre of the community helping it to prosper as the church has done.

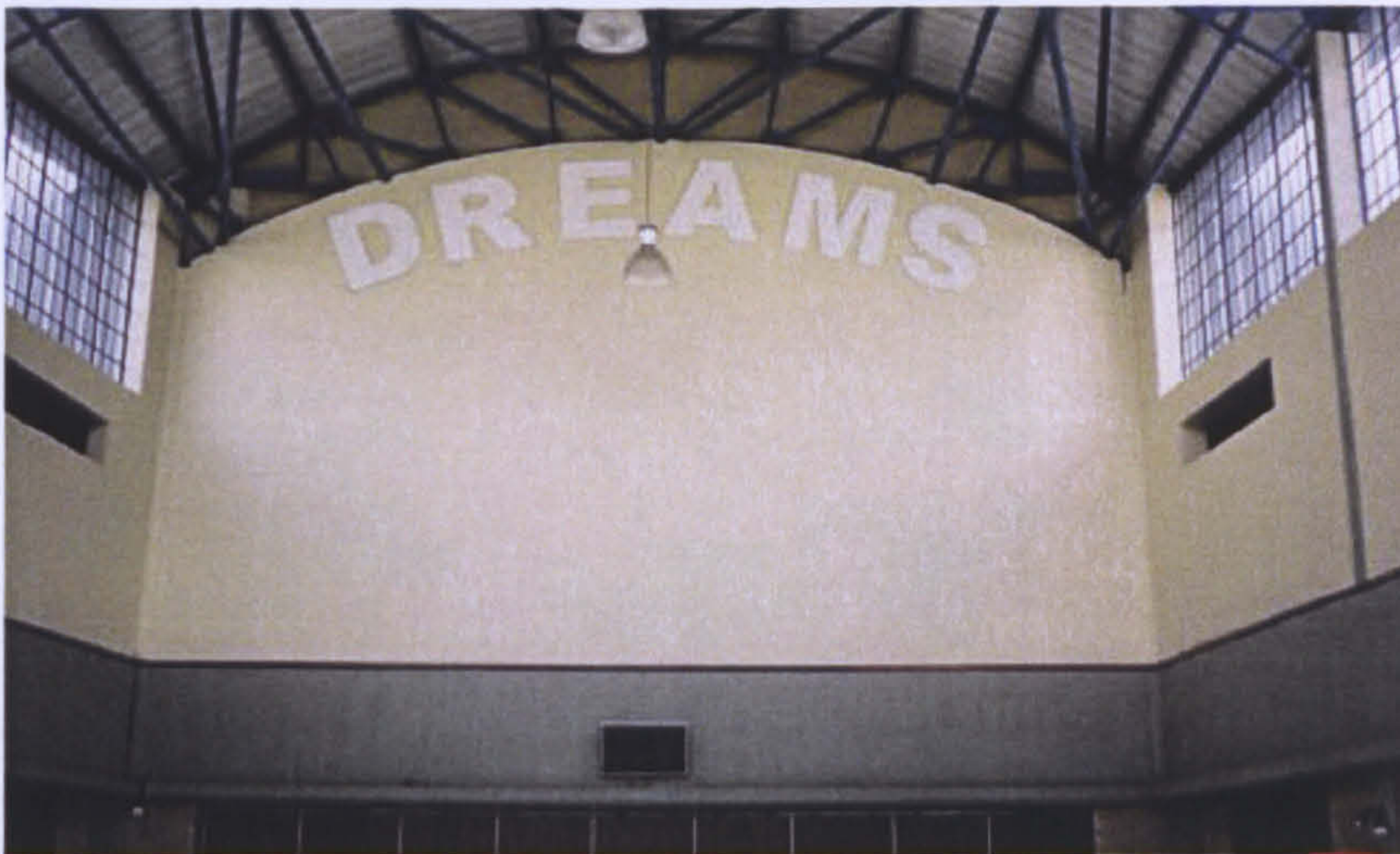


Figure 5.8 In the foyer the word 'dreams' captures the church's theology of potential.



Figure 5.9 A horse-drawn cart carrying wood on a road outside the church.

Soweto was a place of enormous contrasts, where poverty and ponerious mobility existed side by side. It has become one of the key real estate centres in South Africa with large hotels and shopping Malls being built and transforming it into a city. For low cost, 2 and 3 bedroom houses valued at R168,000 (£ 13,000) shown in the pictures below, there were 7 buyers for every house on the market.³⁶



Figure 5.10 Front door to a house opposite Grace Bible church.

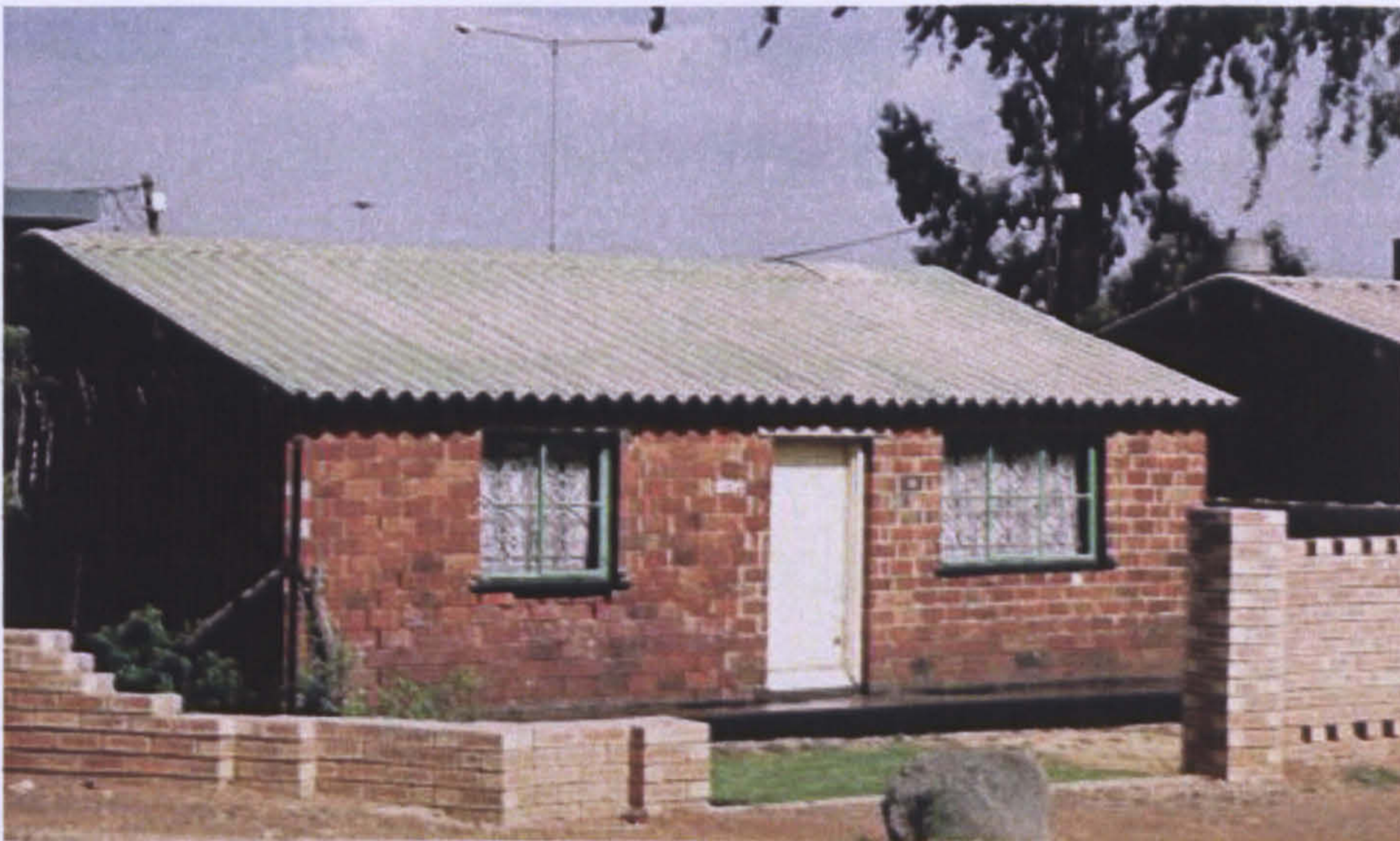


Figure 5.11 A small new 2 bedroom house in Soweto.

³⁶ Statistics from Tracey French of Mortgage S.A. (2006).

A typical Grace Bible Church service

Entering in at one of the numerous doors to the church I was greeted by friendly ushers who directed people to available seats. The ushers were all smartly dressed in pale blue shirts or blouses and black slacks or skirts. The church did not hand out any brochure, newsletter or magazine and they did not have a mission statement or list of core values on display. There were 3 services on a Sunday morning: at 7 o'clock with around 3,000 people; the main service at 9 o'clock with about 4,500 people; and at 11:30 with generally 2,500 people. The last service had a different tone from the first two services and Pastor Sono rarely preached at it.

There was no one age group that markedly dominated the church, although there were more people under 40 than over 40 years of age. Amongst the people streaming into the church on a Sunday morning I saw many families with a father, mother and young children. There were also young single people who came together in groups and older women carrying young children with no men around them. There did not seem to be one dominant family norm but people from all sorts of family structures and backgrounds. Seeing the people coming into the church I was struck by how well dressed everyone was and in future I found myself dressing up to go to church. Grace attracted middle and some upper class people, but also many poor working class and unemployed people.

Before the service began prayer intercessors sat in small groups scattered around the church praying for the congregation, and the band ran through the songs prepared for the service. The band members all wore colour and style co-

ordinated clothes. Roughly 40% of the songs were in English, while the other songs were in a variety of African languages. Once the music started economic differences became less significant as everyone was swept along on the same spiritual journey. They began with songs that praised God and affirmed that He cared for them, His children. The songs then asked forgiveness for sins and moved on to rejoice in the grace of God. During the singing people stood and clapped their hands and swayed or danced to the rhythm of the music.

These first songs took about 15 minutes after which everyone sat down and the announcements were made. By this time about 98% of the congregation had arrived. This was very different from most township churches where people arrive during the first hour of the service and the services last between 2 and 4 hours. First time visitors were welcomed and then everyone greeted those seated around them. Announcements were made - usually advertising conferences, camps, special events at the church, and giving the details of forthcoming weddings and funerals. In African culture everyone in a community is invited to a funeral or wedding. By giving all these announcements the church tried to keep a sense of African community - 'ubuntu' - alive.

After the announcements the band led the congregation in worshipful songs and opened a time of collective prayer in which people prayed either in tongues or a language they were comfortable in. The prayers were very intense and moving as people brought their pain and longing to God. This was followed by a 5 minute offertory sermon, focused specifically on the importance of giving to God and the

church. While the offertory baskets went around, the band played joyful songs that rejoiced in all the blessings God had given his people.

At Grace all the sermons were in English, but this was a fairly recent change. When I first went to Grace in 2001 while doing research for my MA, Pastor Sono preached in English and someone translated the sermon into isiZulu or isiSotho as he spoke. The change gave the preacher more time for his sermon and made the church 'modern'. Pastor Sono did about 80% of the preaching at the first two morning services. The other pastors and elders preached at the 11:30 service or the early services when Sono was away. Pastor Sono was an excellent public speaker. His sermons were well structured, engaging and topical. The key points and scripture references were projected on the overhead screen. There was no set lectionary that the church worked through, rather, Pastor Sono and the other full time pastors developed a sermon plan addressing the needs of the congregation and topical social issues. His preaching seemed to be the biggest draw card and accounted for the phenomenal growth of the church. His sermons felt like inspiring motivational seminars with a Christian ethical code. While he preached in English he often slipped into isiZulu or isiSotho to tell a joke, use an idiom or illustrate a point. The audiences loved this mixture of languages and responded well to his 'African asides'. They reinforced the African identity of the congregation and their sense of unity. By using African languages he created a sense of being part of an in-group. There was a boundary between the world that could only understand English and their world that could move fluidly between English and African languages. With these asides he was reminding people that they were a church that had not lost touch with their African roots.

Sometimes Pastor Sono abandoned his notes and began to speak as the ‘Spirit led him.’ This happened 3 times while I was doing my research and each occasion was very powerful. These sessions were normally about being held in some kind of bondage such as anger, apathy or anxiety. By the power of the Holy Spirit people could break out of these forms of spiritual bondage that were caused by the power of evil spirits in their lives. Birgit Meyer has written extensively on the importance of evil, witchcraft and ancestor worship in Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian (PCC) churches in Ghana (Meyer 1992; Meyer 1995; Meyer 1998a; Meyer 1998b; Meyer 1999). She has argued that by focusing on the power of evil these churches are continually keeping the past African traditions and religion alive as the members are encouraged to explain all their misfortune due to the power of demons – understood in terms of a cosmology of African evil spirits – and in so doing keep this world alive in the reality of the Christian believer. While this was true at Grace the powerful thing about the references to demons and the evil of ancestor worship was the manner in which the various African traditional customs and practices in South Africa were moulded into a homogeneous unit. This was a process of Africanization that not only tried to sanitise African customs but also harmonise them into a collective whole.

Jean Comaroff (1985) has argued that people who are decentred must and do strive to reconstruct their universe. Grace was a place where this process was continually being worked out. The Comaroffs (1991; 1997) have argued that by creating their particular form of South African Zionism the Tshidi opened up for themselves a middle ground between an increasingly impotent ‘traditional’ order and an alluring, modern world that marginalized them. This was a process of

resistance against oppression in which they re-interpreted many of the symbols of both these worlds to create their own religious and cultural universe. Jim Kiernan on the other hand sees Zulu Zionist syncretism from a different angle and argues that it was a universe in which ‘the problem is African; the answer is Christian’ (1994: 82). Both these arguments are insightful for the people and process of resistance they aimed to explain but cannot be regarded as universal explanations for the previously disadvantaged of South Africa.

From the beginning the members of Grace Bible church rejected all forms of ancestor worship and veneration. Their engagement in a purposive act of reconstruction did not draw a middle ground between their past world and the world they were aspiring to. They looked beyond the realm of their oppressors to the larger global market, drawing on international corporate and Christian symbols of prosperity, in the process discarding the mythological elements of African culture. For these members their particular faith was a way to cope with modernity – just as earlier forms of African Traditional Religion (ATR) had helped people manage a pre-modern world (Comaroff and Comaroff 1993; Meyer 1999; Van Dijk 1997). But I would not like to limit PCC to solely symbolic terms, which disregard the importance of theology and an experienced faith in God, in the lives of the believers. Grace, like His People helped people make sense of their world and religious experiences. In this thesis I will not engage in a theological discussion but do not disregard the faith of the women I interviewed as mere fiction (for a more detailed discussion see Horton 1993; ter Haar 1998).

During the services there were Sunday school classes for children and young teenagers but nothing for the older teenagers, who usually joined in with the larger congregation. In the holidays the church organised camps and weekly activities for the children. For the Easter holidays they were planning a camp for children in grades 0 – 3 and it was going to cost R 100.00 (£ 8.50) for the weekend. The children's activities were not as organised and well staffed as at His People. At Grace the young children generally sat quietly with their parents through the service and there was no 'Cry Room'³⁷ as there was at His People.

Leadership and activities

Grace Bible Church in Soweto has given rise to 15 satellite churches in the Gauteng area that collectively make up the Grace Bible Church body. This larger body was also part of the Grace Family of churches – three independent mega-churches and their satellites. Grace Bible Church in Soweto had a paid staff of 9 people – 5 full time administrative staff and 4 full time pastors: Pastor Mosa Sono, Pastor Gege (Sono's wife), Pastor Fannie and Pastor Ezekiel. The church also had a number of self-supporting pastors and elders who oversaw the different departments or activities and managed the church finances. The church was structured in a pyramid hierarchy with Pastor Sono at the top as the leader, visionary and voice of the church. In business terms, he was the Chief Executive Officer of the church. Under him were the executive managers – the 3 full time pastors and 5 executive elders. They oversaw the departmental heads who managed the various activities within a department. Everyone who was a leader

³⁷ A special sound proof room where parents can take their babies and toddlers during the service. In these rooms there is a speaker so that the parents can hear the sermons and music without their children disturbing the service.

met every second Saturday for a general meeting. The first half of the meeting was an address by Pastor Sono detailing the events and planning of the church. After this people divided into their departments and discussed what needed to be done in the coming two weeks.

The different departments in the church were:

- ***Home Cell Groups***

These were run in much the same way as the His People home cells except that the material people studied was determined by the church leaders. The home cell leaders reported back on the home cell's progress at the Saturday meetings.

- ***Youth Ministry***

Grace did not have a vibrant youth ministry. They only had about 200 teenagers coming to their Friday evening meetings. According to the elder who oversaw this ministry, students had busy lives, lived far from the church, and transport to the church after dark was dangerous making events difficult for students to attend.

- ***Children's Ministry***

Children from nursery school age to their teens had Children's church during the 7 o' clock and 9 o'clock services. The children's ministry was not as highly organised as at His People and there were no parent training courses.

- ***Women's Ministry***

This was a very active and powerful ministry within the church. Pastor Sono had advised the women to organise 4 functions a year so that women were not over burdened both with organising events and attending them. He believed that they needed to have time for their families as well. Normally these Saturday conferences, which attracted about 3,000 women, were addressed by guest speakers. They usually dealt with issues particularly relevant to women, for example how to get ahead in business, be a successful wife, or care for their children. This made Grace quite different from mainline churches and African Independent Churches (AIC) where the weekly women's fellowship groups was central to the life of the women and their churches, as Gaitsell (1997) and Haddad (2002) have shown.

- ***Men's Ministry***

The men at Grace also got together for conferences about 4 times a year. Like the women, they were addressed by guest speakers on issues relevant to them. At both the men's and women's meetings there were not only good speakers, but also excellent food and ample time for prayer.

- ***Prayer and Counselling***

Prayer was very important at Grace. Many people belonged to prayer groups and met regularly on Friday evenings for prayer meetings or all night vigils. As in AICs and historical churches these were important social occasions where people met in the home of one of the members and

stayed up all night singing and praying for the needs of their families, church and community. In the morning they broke their fast with a meal that they cooked together. Several of the young women I interviewed were very involved in prayer groups. Intercession before services and prayer counselling for people who had given their lives to God during the service were two other central ministries in the life of the church.

Counselling was also important but, unlike His People, Grace offered few counselling courses. They did some lay counselling and ran pre-marriage courses but it was not as structured and integral to the life of the church as at His People. At Grace the prayer meetings and home cells were the key places where people received support and guidance. Like His People they also ran a 13 week long membership course which anyone wishing to become a member had to attend.

- ***Conference Organisation***

Weekend conferences and special events were crucial in the life of the church. They provided teaching and a place for people to come together and socialise. The most important annual conference was The Leadership Conference. Everyone who had some form of leadership position in the church was required to go on this course. The various speakers were people who had made their mark in industry or politics. The conferences were very popular amongst the women I interviewed who felt they had learnt a lot from them.

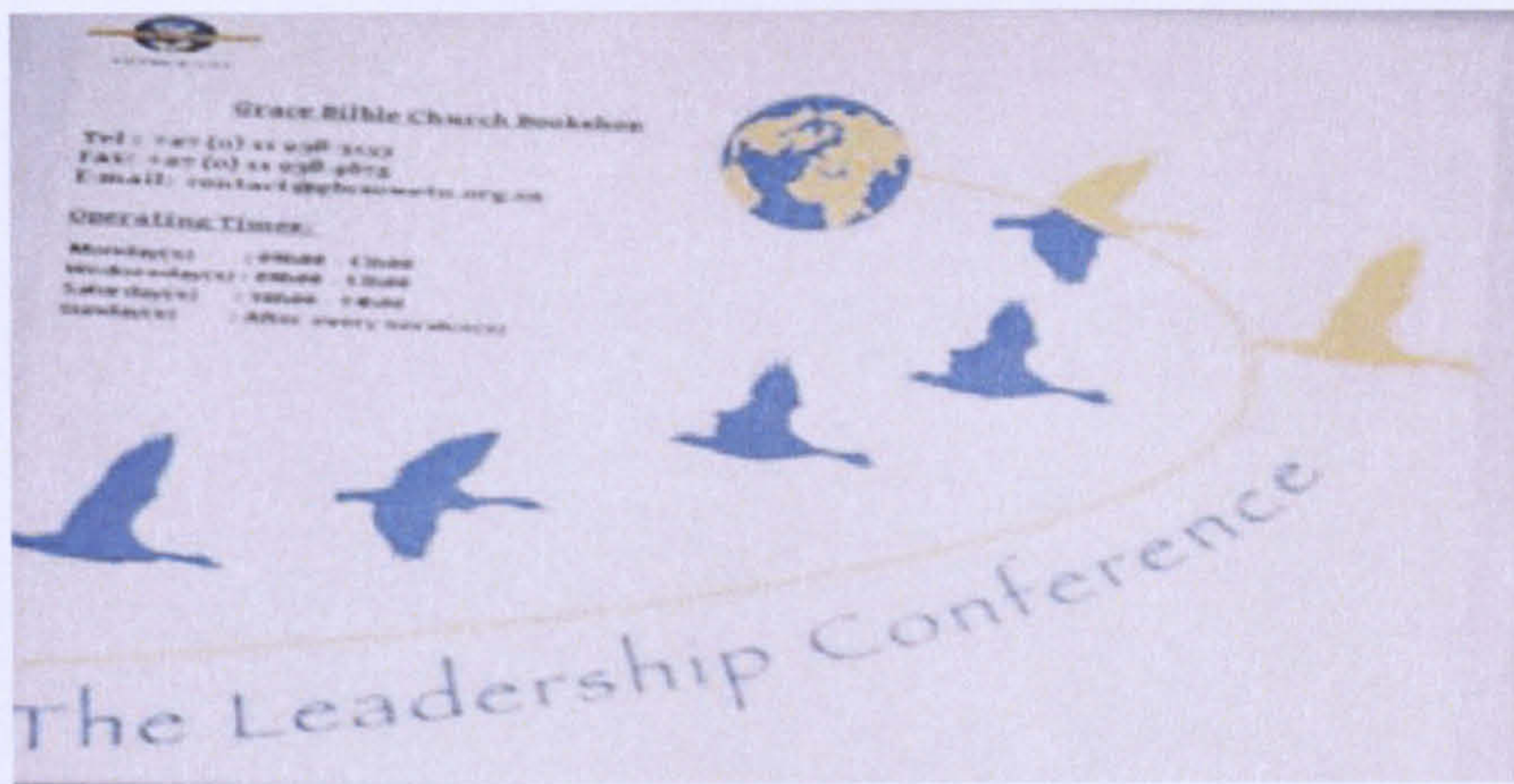


Figure 5.13 Poster advertising the annual leadership conference.

- ***Media and Information Department***

This department managed all the communication in the church including the bookshop. The church did not produce any magazine or leaflets; all the announcements were made through the home cells and during the services. The church did not have a website, but the administration staff communicated with me through emails.

- ***Outreach and Care Ministry***

The church was involved in a wide variety of community based projects from sewing classes to computer training and HIV/Aids home based care. They worked hard to raise money and food for people in distress and provided care schemes for people affected by HIV/Aids. For children identified as being in need by their teachers, they provided lunches at a variety of schools in the area.

- *Creative Arts Ministry*

The band, choir, and various other creative art teams fell under this department. There was one band that performed at the services on a Sunday. At special events the choir sang and the various drama teams performed pieces. This ministry also included community art and dance classes.

Grace did not have its own Bible School and there was no official business network, but a lot of unofficial networking took place. While I was at Grace there were occasional announcements on a Sunday morning that a large company was recruiting interns and anyone with the relevant qualifications was encouraged to phone the number displayed on the electronic screen above the stage. This particular form of recruitment was possible because there were several people who work as human resources managers in large companies. About 30% of the women I interviewed belonged to 'Focus' a Christian businessperson's support group, not officially linked to Grace. The group meet every Tuesday evening in Rosebank and discuss how they could realise success in the business world while witnessing to their colleagues about God and conducting their business dealings in an ethical manner. There was no organised social group for people in their 20's or 30's. The women that I met did not see this as a major loss because they organised their own group activities and get-togethers from braais (barbecue), to trips to the new apartheid museums in Gauteng.

Unlike His People, Grace had far stronger links to corporate and public organisations. Grace was particularly involved with the police force, and when

the police force launched its moral regeneration programme for 2004 one of the events was held at Grace. It was a dedication and prayer service for all the men and women on the police force, held one Sunday after the 9 o' clock service. During the time that I was at Grace, Pastor Sono went to America to spend a week in New York learning from the NYPD about the moral regeneration programmes that they had implemented and how they had been able to make the streets of New York safer. On his return he spent time with the Gauteng Police force sharing with them what he had learnt. The church also had strong links with the ANC and some large multi-national companies.

On the Sunday before the 10th anniversary of South Africa's first democratic elections the church had a day long celebration filled with sermons, praise and worship music, dances, short acts and guest speakers. The event was sponsored by Old Mutual, one of the insurance and investment banks in South Africa. They had decided to sponsor the Grace Bible Church's Sunday celebration rather than put on a celebration event in one of the soccer stadiums as many other large companies had done. The speakers were media celebrities, successful entrepreneurs and ANC members of parliament. They all encouraged people to embrace the opportunities that the New South Africa had brought about and to play their role in making South Africa a prosperous nation. The central message was that people had fought the battle against apartheid and won, now they needed to fight the battle against poverty and win. This engagement with political and civil groups has been identified in other conservative churches in which their views and activities were justified in religious terms (Gifford 1998; Roberts 2003).

Outline of Grace Bible Church theology

At Grace Bible church the key words were 'potential' and to a lesser extent 'purpose'. Moso Sono was the voice and vision of this church and his idea of purpose was not a purpose realised only in material wealth. He maintained that while this might be what some come to realise as they took up their calling, others might find that their purpose was to nurse a dying parent or care for Aids orphans.

For Pastor Sono the key was helping people realise their God-given potential. Believers were encouraged to take risks, try things out and develop self-confidence. His preaching was clearly aimed at overcoming the negative legacy of apartheid, which taught black people that they were inferior to white people. Pastor Sono was passionate that his people realise that as black people they could achieve anything. 'Dare to aspire to something,' was one of his favourite phrases. He reminded them that they were 'not dependent on your family or education or whether you have a father or mother or who you are. . . God will use you to do what you can't do alone,' (Pastor Sono 27 June 2004). He used his own history and the story of the growth of the church as examples of what people from Soweto could achieve.

Not only was the legacy of apartheid often addressed in Pastor Sono's sermons, a point that some of the younger women found tedious at times, but he also challenged what he saw as the apathy of the current youth who were growing up with many more opportunities than his generation had had. 'Because of poverty we end up in a negative cycle of "can't". We therefore become negative and it

becomes the picture we have of ourselves,' (Pastor Sono 27 June 2004). Nati, a marketing manager, explained that

(m)y father was so negative and then I came here and I learnt that there is this thing of being positive. So you come here on Sunday and it's like having a bath and God is with you and he is helping you. Then you realise that there is space for change and improvement. Then you become a happy person after church (Nati, 33, S, sales and marketing director, G.B.).

Pastor Sono wanted to break the sense that under the new government not much had changed and that black people were destined to spend their lives on the economic and political fringe of the world. While he was not preaching a prosperity gospel or starting a political revolution he was encouraging his people to become active participants in South Africa's political, economic and cultural transformation. He inspired people to pray for jobs, to have faith that God wanted to bless them with success and that they needed actively to shape their own destinies. He impressed on members the importance of voting in elections and becoming involved in civic concern groups.

This was a theology of this-world salvation. In other words salvation meant being saved from a negative this world experience to a positive reality not found in some future but in this world, blurring the lines between any worldly/otherworldly dichotomy (Ammerman 1994; Roberts 2003). Gifford (2004a: 109) has noted that in classical Pentecostalism salvation was about atonement, forgiveness and reconciliation with God. In some of the new prophetic PCC churches in Ghana salvation has come to focus almost exclusively on this-world terms, and notions

of sin hardly arose. Salvation was about deliverance from physical needs in this world. In the Faith gospel, prosperity had replaced the focus on healing that was central in most AICs. Like the PCCs Gifford (2004a: 81) encountered in Ghana, the theology of Grace Bible Church was not marked by any millennial expectations.

This-world salvation and the message of self worth and optimism were coupled with a puritan life-style that emphasised a striving for excellence. Everything Christians did should be done with dedication and excellence - because they were working for the Kingdom of God. Arriving at Grace I was amazed by the number of luxury cars in the car park and the beautiful clothes of many of the congregation. These outward symbols of wealth were part of the 'potential' theology. Like His People, Grace had re-interpreted material symbols of success to be signs of God's blessing on those who realised their potential and served Him by working with excellence.

Family was a key focus and about 30% of Sono's sermons concentrated on family and fatherhood. The nuclear family was understood as a sign of Christian blessing and part of the puritan life. Good relations with relatives were encouraged, and aged parents should be cared for, not put into old age homes. Men were told to honour their responsibilities to their families, pay *lobola* (bride price) for their wives, live with their families and provide both economic and emotional support to their families. They should play an active role in raising their children and understand that a 'real man' proved his manhood by caring for

his family and not by having several girl friends, abandoning his children and ‘wasting money on drink’.

In traditional African religions and culture important family events include religious practices that venerated or worshiped the ancestors and asked for their blessings. At Grace ancestor worship or veneration was regarded as evil. This meant that members of Grace should not partake in any sacrifices or prayers to the ancestors. The men and women I spoke to believed that ancestor worship was not Christian but they went along to the family *Umsebenzi* or rituals gatherings. These Christians were caught in a difficult situation. They knew their families believed that the *Umsebenzi* would only be successful if all the family members were present and they knew that it was participation and not belief that was important. Many of them compromised by going along to these events, but not actually saying or meaning the prayers. As Christians they felt they had access to a greater power in the Holy Spirit than the ancestors.

By the power of the Holy Spirit healing was considered possible from all sorts of physical, emotional and social ills; and emotional, financial and social blessings were believed to pour forth. Prayer, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit, especially the gift of tongues were central in the life of Grace. According to the members this was the power that made growth possible and brought about all the blessings the church experienced. As Christians they saw themselves as delivered and protected from the evil forces of poverty, apathy, feelings of inferiority and the curse of *sangomas* (herbalist and shaman) and ancestors. They were able to strive for success and believe in themselves because

they were protected from the curses of jealous neighbours. This was a gospel of freedom because it was also a gospel of protection.

To arm themselves against evil and to understand the radical truth and power of the Christian faith members at Grace read their bibles with interest. Most people went to church with a bible and underlined the important verses that the preacher highlighted during the sermon. They felt that their home cells were important not only because the groups supported each other with prayer but also because they learnt to understand the Word of God better. Like Rhema and His People, Grace Bible Church was influenced by the 'Word of Faith' movement and laid emphasis on a conservative hermeneutical knowledge of the bible. The bible was understood as the direct and infallible Word of God and the stories in the bible were presented as literal historical events that were immediately relevant to the life of the believer.

Conclusion

The mission of Grace Bible Church was to present the gospel in a relevant way to the saved and unsaved, the rich and the poor, bringing all to Christ. Pastor Sono believed that all people should embrace their God given potential and realise that they were freed from the bondage of poverty and the curses of witchcraft. If the believers lived honest, hard working lives according to biblical principles, they would be blessed with material wealth, health and happiness in this world. Christians should speak in the language of the age, and so sermons were presented in the language of corporate motivational messages, and consumer goods were

coded as symbols of success that witnessed to the power of God to bless and protect his children.

In their 2003 overview of South Africa Daniel, Habib and Southall (2003: 30) argued that unless changes were brought about South Africa would remain two nations divided socio-economically. The division would be between the privileged professional middle class, both black and white, who would likely become increasingly deracialised, and the disempowered, unemployed and marginalized of whom a small minority would be Indian and white while the vast majority would be black. Grace Bible Church was a mega-church in the heart of Soweto led by a powerful and dynamic son of the township. It stood as a symbol of success amongst the rows of small houses and struggling poor. Here the division between the wealthy and the poor was being challenged as people from all parts of Gauteng flocked to be inspired and guided on what they believed to be their own path to success in a country both bright with possibilities and dangerously close to despair. The economic mobility was happening for some South Africans with or without the churches. As Toulis has noted for Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches in Britain, the role the churches were playing was 'as a powerful forum for the construction of new identities which are used to negotiate the dominant, and often injurious, representations made about black' or previously disadvantaged South African people (Toulis 1997: 2).

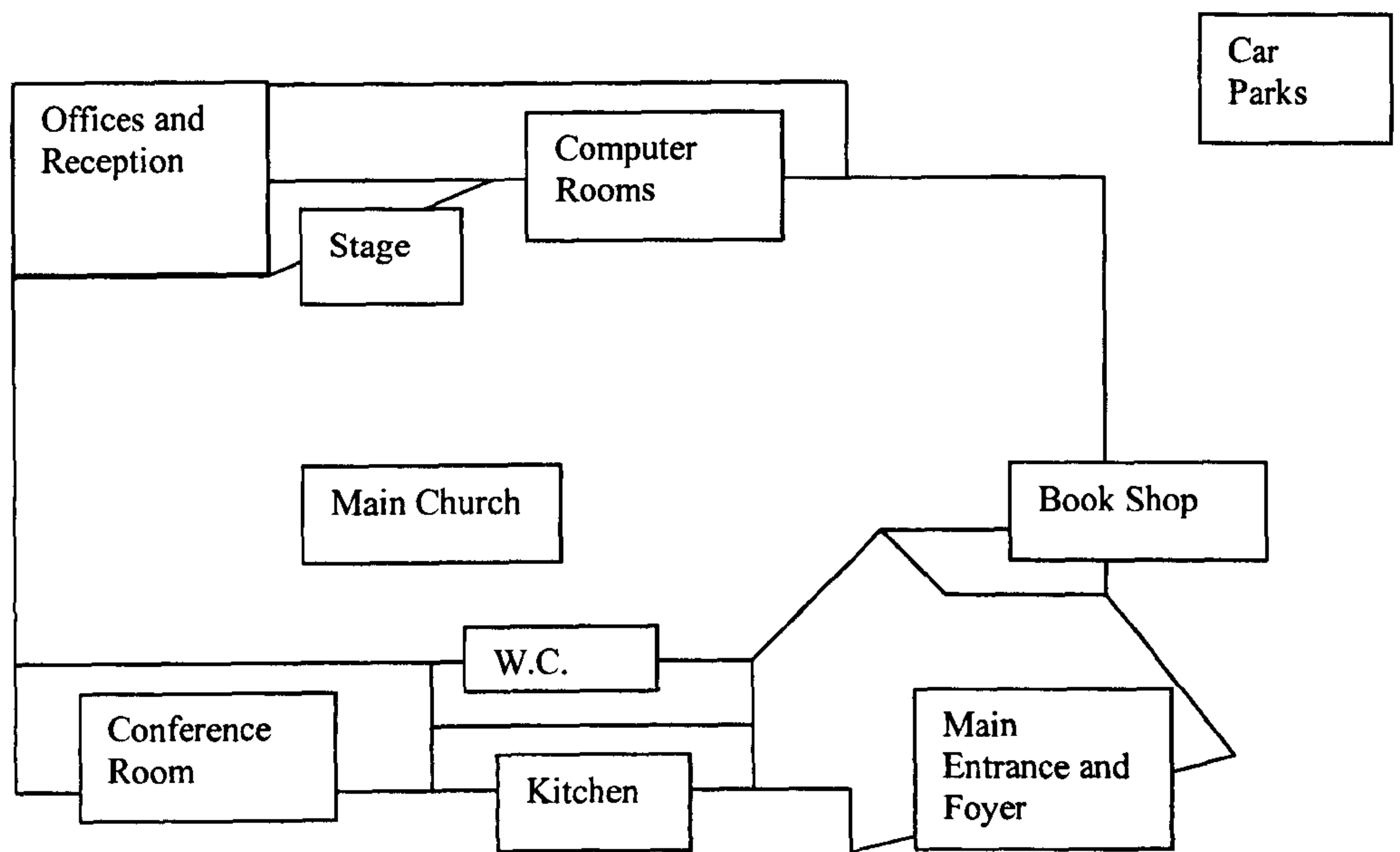


Figure 5.14 Floor plan of Grace Bible church – not to scale

Chapter 6

Joining a Church and Negotiating Cultural Dislocation

Introduction

This thesis is moving towards explaining why politically and economically emancipated women choose to join a form of Christianity that ideologically seems to oppress them. Unlike the majority of research into women in developing countries who attend Pentecostal-Charismatic churches (Brusco 1986; Brusco 1995; Drogus 1997; Boudewijne, Droogers et al. 1998; Martin 2001; Peterson, Vásquez et al. 2001), I will suggest that in the churches I studied there was not a feminization of religion but a masculinization of religion. In so doing I am working with Bendroth's (1993) and DeBerg's (1990) argument that 1920s Fundamentalism was a masculinization of religion as it reversed the Victorian Evangelical Protestantism teaching that 'elevated women as the keepers of morality and assumed conversely that men had no natural aptitude for religion' (Bendroth 1993: 3). In contrast Fundamentalists adopted the belief that women had a limited aptitude for religion and men were the true voice of Christian reason. At the same time there was a divinisation of the home, emphasising domestic duties over church ministry. Women were encouraged to see marriage and child-care as their social ministry rather than missionary work or church leadership (DeBerg 1990). The ideal became the warrior Christian – a masculine figure who could fight for Christ in a corrupt world.

While 1920s Fundamentalism in North America and 2004 Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity in South Africa were worlds apart they both flourished in

situations of anxiety about shifting gender roles. In these churches the prevailing rhetoric was primarily aimed at men and spoke in the language of the corporate world, presenting strong masculine leaders and aggressively combating female entry into positions of executive authority. Bendroth suggested that the reason why women were attracted to these churches lay beyond a strict gender-based speculation.

Women like men, found in the fundamentalist movement a clear, though perhaps narrow, call to Christian vocation and a language of cultural critique that simplified the daunting range of choices in the secular lifestyle. Women perhaps especially appreciated the movement's high standard for family life. . . . Fundamentalist churches upheld women's role in the family and even more importantly provided a forum for like-minded women to air common fears and hopes for their children (Bendroth 1993:11).

His People and Grace Bible church spent a third of their time teaching men how to be good fathers, hard working employees and faithful husbands who took care of their families by providing for them. This approach seemed to be popular because in both churches men constituted just over 40% of the membership. But why was this popular amongst women?

Many women are disappointed with the feminist movement because it has given women access to traditionally male occupations such as business or political leadership without getting men to participate in traditionally female duties such as housework or child care. Perhaps most importantly, feminism has failed to get society to value these traditionally female responsibilities. Conservative religious leaders appeal to that disappointment when they preach that women must make a choice. Either you can be a feminist, which means you'll have more freedom but you will have to work harder and cannot count on anyone to help you; or you can

return to tradition, which means you'll give up some autonomy but men will take care of you and you will be part of a community that values women's domestic work (Manning 1999:126).

The argument that women have been turning to conservative religions because they were disappointed in feminism may hold in North America (Hunter 1987; Manning 1999; Stacey and Gerard 1990). In South Africa some professional women have joined Pentecostal-Charismatic churches not to escape the demands or disappointments of feminism but rather to negotiate these, in the context of the country's turbulent social change and their own upward mobility. In other words these women found that feminism as a life-style or ideology made it possible for them to enter the corporate world, but it did not give them sufficient guidance and support in managing the multiple implications of economic change. These churches appeared to offer them the stability of a structured system of belief that not only made sense of the world but also encouraged members to realise personal success in this world. In the two churches in my study four important things happened for women. 1) The churches preached in the masculine rhetoric of corporate culture – a world largely alien to these young women but where they were trying to make their mark. 2) They gave them guidance in tracking their own path through the complexities of African cultures and their relationship to these. 3) They taught them to believe in themselves - that they had a purpose and potential beyond child-bearing. 4) Paradoxically these churches also maintain home-making and child-bearing as the most sacred of female activities. For women who were marrying later and having children much later in life than their parents, being aligned to these churches kept them imaginatively connected to this ideal. For married women who already had children these churches gave them

authority in the home to demand material, physical and emotional support from their husbands, provided clear guidelines on how to be a nuclear family and gave women new status in the home.

Here I will primarily discuss the first two points and in so doing I address the second broad group of questions proposed at the beginning of the thesis namely – why do women join these churches and what do the churches offer them? This chapter is also an endeavour to pick up Mbembe's and Nutall's (2004b: 348-50) challenge to study Africa not from an epistemology particular to the 'Other' but through mainline social theories. Cultural identity was deeply bound up in the process of joining these churches making Bourdieu's notions of capital, habitus and dispositions useful ideas 'to think with'. To locate my study within the context of the women I met I shall begin with two cameos that highlight their experiences. The chapter then moves to a more detailed discussion of the background or habitus from which the women who joined these two churches came and the importance of culture in their religious experience. This forms the context from which to begin an analysis of the reasons why they joined these churches. Beckford makes an analytical distinction between first-order constructs, 'meanings attributed to religion by individuals, groups, organisations and institutions' and second-order constructs of religion (Beckford 2003: 23). By focusing on the social usages of religion it is possible to contribute to a more textured understanding of cultural developments, as religious movements are an integral part of the larger society (Beckford 2003: 10).

Stories from Soweto

One of the first interviews I had was with Norma who was 32 and worked in a management consulting company. When I first met her she was wearing a long cream skirt, a black T-shirt, denim jacket and black boots. I was struck by her hair that was short and natural. Her English was very good and once she was more comfortable she began to use vernacular words and idioms to illustrate a point. We talked about identity and I asked her if she felt that there was such a thing as an 'African identity'.

Well, yes but there is not one thing that is "African" and everyone is struggling to see who they are. Lucy and I had this thing that no one must see our natural hair. . . I think it was rooted in a lack of appreciation for what you have. And devaluing yourself.

When I asked her to explain this more she said:

Well you have to understand that there are Oreos, you know the classical coconut and then there are Romary Creams, (a chocolate biscuit made in South Africa) they are black on the outside and black on the inside. Now Oreos do the whole speak English, forget the townships thing, only worry about me, myself and I. Romary Creams we have also been through the whole model C schools³⁸ thing and all that, but we try to stay connected to the township, not just for parties but go back to the community and do something for the people we grew up with. This whole hair thing it was an Oreo or Romary Cream thing. As Oreos Lucy and I just couldn't show our natural hair. But 18 months ago I took out all the braids because I have been going through this thing of who am I. I am African and why am I hiding that? So now I just have my natural hair. It put a real strain

³⁸ Multiracial schools that were introduced at the beginning of the 1990's. These schools were more expensive than the average government school and had better equipment and facilities.

on our friendship. Lucy is still so the classical Oreo and I am more a Romary Cream (R C) and we are getting to be so different. Because the R. C thing is about identifying with suffering and not just having things for yourself. So many of the young people are growing up with no connection to suffering and so are they really African? Being African is about having a heart for Africa. I am not interested in a man who makes a-hell-of-a-lot of money but just wants to go overseas and leave Africa.

Norma was born in Soweto where she and her mother lived with her grandmother. Sometimes her mother worked as a cleaner and was away from home for months and other times she was unemployed. In her 8th year at school she won a scholarship to a private high school where she completed her matric. Her good school leaving marks meant that she won a scholarship to Wits to study physiotherapy. When she went back home during the school holidays she said it was 'like walking on water' – she was the golden child who could do no wrong. Norma's sense of alienation continued when she went to university. Because she had attended a private school her English was particularly good and the students on campus ostracised her, accusing her of not being 'properly black' saying she had not 'suffered' through a township education. They made her feel unwelcome in the black Christian student groups. But the black and white students at the His People campus meetings made her feel welcome and accepted. She soon became friends with a group of girls who had similar experiences remaining with the church because of her friendships and the supportive mentoring she received.

In her professional life, she, like 75% of the interviewees her age, said that the most difficult thing about corporate life was learning how to understand the white, male dominated world they were thrust into. These women felt that they did not

understand the jokes, were uncomfortable speaking in meetings and unsure of what to wear, or eat during working lunches. On the whole these things caused them far more stress than their actual work. Norma thought that too much had been expected of her generation and they were not given any help from their parents who lacked insight into corporate life. Norma started to go for counselling during 2002 in order to work through the many expectations that had been put onto her, her own sense of failure that she was not married and the identity crisis she was experiencing. Towards the end of my fieldwork Norma moved from His People to Grace Bible church because she felt that Grace had a more 'Romary Cream approach' (Norma, 32, S, corporate consultant, H.P.).



Figure 6.1 Postcard for a radio station, which is encouraging black people not to become Oreos but to be black and proud of who they are. The women at both His People and Grace Bible church were picking up on this debate and giving it their own interpretation by talking about being Romary Creams rather than Oreos or Opeos.

In contrast Mpho, dressed in tight jeans, white high heels and extended hair dyed an almost cherry red was a vivacious 24 year old woman who had just been promoted to manager in one of the service sections at a large medical aid

company where she worked. She spoke enthusiastically about Grace Bible Church as being the place where her family had been saved from destruction. Her mother was an alcoholic and she did not know who her father was. Growing up they had very little 'because my mother would always drink the money. I used to be so filled with this hate'. At high school she had some friends who went to Grace Bible Church. They found the sermons inspiring and enjoyed socialising with the other teenagers after the service. Sometimes she would go with her friends to Grace, but only at 10:00 to avoid all the singing, which they found tedious. From the age of 16 Mpho began to work over weekends at a clothing store in one of the big shopping malls. With her financial independence she was free from her mother's poverty and could buy the clothes she loved.

In the taxi going to work her mother met a woman who told her about Grace Bible Church, and the following Sunday she went with this new friend to Grace. During the service her mother felt God talking to her and she committed her life to God. She went home, threw away the alcohol, and never drank again. Mpho was so moved by the transformation in her mother that she began to take the sermons more seriously and finally re-committed her life to God realising that she had been saved but had never been fully committed. At this stage she was in her first year at the Technikon of the Witwatersrand studying public relations. For Mpho a serious commitment meant being able to go to church every Sunday and not working on Sundays. She gave up her job, although this meant that she was totally dependent on her mother. She believed God honoured this sacrifice because she overcame several difficulties at Technikon and found work. When we met she had the sort of job she had always wanted.

These two cameos paint pictures of struggle and overcoming hardship. In the next section I will draw on these and the other interviews to detail the background from which the women in my study came. This will inform my overall examination of the role of these two churches in the lives of some women in South Africa. I will work with, and at times stretch, Bourdieu's ideas of habitus, fields and capital because these provide a broad framework with which to explore the dramatic cultural shifts taking place and people's unceasing attempts to shape enduring identities and predictability in their lives.

Generation X and Y and the importance of family

According to Bourdieu each person has a habitus, which is the framework of an individual's dispositions. The habitus is part of the environment in which people grow-up. It shapes their taste and they 'continue to choose aesthetically according to this background' (Bourdieu 1989: 260). So for Bourdieu members of a particular group or class will have correlating traits that correspond to a particular social unit. Habitus is understood as both the environment of an individual family home and the collective habitat of a social group, which could include a social class or institution. Dispositions, he argued, were the individual expressions of taste determined by the aesthetics a person had learnt in their habitus. Class for Bourdieu was determined by social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital rather than just along relations of production (Bourdieu 1989: 106). The working class were disempowered because they not only had low economic capital but also limited cultural and social capital while the dominant classes had high economic and/or cultural capital (Bourdieu 1989: 260-3). Bourdieu acknowledged individuality and the impact of gender, race and age, but did not deal with these in

any depth. His work was largely limited to France and, one Algerian community in the 1960's, allowing him to lean towards a view of habitus that was focused more on the homogeneity of a class stating for example that 'the singular habitus of members of the same class . . . [reflects] the diversity within homogeneity characteristic of the social conditions of production' (Bourdieu 1990: 60). His lack of sensitivity towards gender, race and age has been heavily criticised (Swartz 1997; Carter 2000; Jenkins 2002; Reay 2004; Skeggs 2004a; Sayer 2005; Silva 2005).

In the multilingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, multi-faith and multi-racial environment of South Africa a theoretical leaning towards homogeneity is limited and much of the complexity is lost. Habitus is a useful concept that allows us to draw the broad differences between classes or groups but in a country where the very demographics of those classes has been changing so rapidly we need to shift the emphasis of habitus somewhat to work with a more flexible concept; one that is particularly racially, gendered and generationally sensitive - and so aware of the diversity amongst South Africans.

Apartheid divided South Africans along racial lines. The focus of this study is on previously disadvantaged women who were all born under apartheid and therefore were part of the black or coloured working classes. Under apartheid there was no collective working, middle or upper class but racially divided classes, and this then is the first deviation from Bourdieu's class homogeneity. The first woman in the cameos was 32 years old when I met her. Born during the 1970's she was part of what has been called the X generation. This generation were school children

and often politically active during the height of the apartheid violence of the 1980's (Maylam 1995). But in post-apartheid South Africa they have floundered, struggling to find a place in society (Dolby 2000). The second woman was in her mid twenties and was part of the Y generation. In her work on the generation Y in Rosebank, Johannesburg, Sarah Nutall (2004) has investigated the culture of the Y generation – largely black middle class or upwardly mobile working class people born in 1980's. They have been stylising their own sense of self, drawing on a hybrid of different local and global influences. She argued that this new emergent self-stylization was 'one of the most decisive shifts of the post-apartheid era' (Nutall 2004: 449). For this generation

self and subjectivity can no longer be interpreted as merely inscriptions of broader institutional and political forces; rather the images project an increased self-consciousness of the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process (Nutall 2004: 438).

This group exudes self-confidence, a sense of belonging and hedonism. They have distanced themselves from suffering, politics and history, and concentrated instead on pleasure and wealth creation. In so doing they have created an elaborate and dynamic register of tastes that cover everything from food, clothes, music to language and philosophical ideas. Dolby (2000) suggested that amongst this group 'taste' has been replacing the orthodox models of race and culture as the signals of social distinction. This young, multiracial, popular culture has been superseding the old sites of identity such as the church, neighbourhood and family.

In terms of social analysis it is limited to talk about a general or universal working class or middle class habitus in South Africa, but to speak of generation X or Y who were from a black working class or white middle class background could be a powerful reference to sets of dispositions that correlate to common attributes within a group.³⁹

Karl Mannheim (1952) suggested that historic generations are persons who share "a common location" in the social process. A generation tends to have common, unifying social experiences, which follow them throughout their lives (Mannheim in Furseth 2005: 160).

The women in my study ranged from 20 to 43 years in age and so fell into the two generational groups X and Y. Those from generation X in my study had a mean age of 31 while the generation Y group had a mean age of 24, in 2004. Moving away from the concept of a homogeneous working class is not to deviate too widely from Bourdieu but to work with his notion that class is itself not a defined entity but the object of continual social conflict (Swartz, 1997: 148). Both the churches located themselves within the larger communities including the X and Y generation, the larger urban black community and the previously white suburban community. These are what Benedict Anderson would call 'imagined communities' – 'community' is 'conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship'(Anderson 1983: 7). The racial communities were defined by apartheid but have now splintered into various communities that are loose, changing and no longer within the bounds of concise analysis – they are imagined and felt rather than tangible.

³⁹ The emphasis on the multivariants in the working class is an attempt to elaborate on Bourdieu's rather thin treatment of the working class(es) as Swartz (1997: 82) has observed.

Class for Bourdieu was also determined by the earning of the head of the family, which he classifies as the father (1986). Elizabeth Silva (2005) in her work on gender and the family criticised Bourdieu for not conceiving of female headed households and argued that classifying a household on the earning of the male was problematic and naïve. This alludes to my third qualifier when talking about habitus as a common collective. Of the fifty-two women I interviewed 73% came from single female headed households, families whose earning was dependent on the income of the mother or grandmother. In my study those women who did come from families with a mother and father generally had a different emotional and material experience of childhood from those who only had a mother and/ or grandmother parenting them.⁴⁰ As we can speak of a generationally and racially distinct habitus so we can also speak of different family structures within these classes – either female or male headed⁴¹.

As women told me their life stories it became apparent that their family structure did not only impact their lives materially but also what cultural information, resources and expectations were passed on to them. To try and explain the impact and importance of this Bourdieu moved from a strictly materialist understanding of the social to one that included other forms of capital and has thus enabled ‘us to think through different types of values and mobility’ (Skeggs 2004b: 21). He identified cultural, social and symbolic capital as being factors that also influenced the habitus of the individual. It was in the family that the mother

⁴⁰ Materially in South Africa family income and classification along the lines of the father’s earning would produce data that is unrepresentative and highly problematic. Not only do many or most families receive no financial support from absent men but some of the women I interviewed earned more than their husbands. Classification therefore needs to be made according to household income, not father’s income. This, in itself is not a new point and in South Africa’s censuses, researchers have looked at the collective household earning - see details from STATSA.

⁴¹ With the impact of Aids a new group of child headed families has also emerged, but this did not affect the women in my study.

passed on the capital of the family to the children and helped them develop their own set of dispositions (Bourdieu 1989).

Cultural capital refers primarily to various forms of legitimate knowledge, for example academic knowledge or table etiquette and exists primarily as a relational concept connecting with other forms of capital. Bourdieu developed the idea that cultural capital was not just acquisitional but also a matter of disposition (1986; 1989; 1993: 215-37). Social capital refers to the connections with the wider society that a family or individual are linked into. Economic capital is the material wealth that an individual has either inherited or generates through his or her interactions with the economy. Symbolic capital is evident in individual esteem and personal attributes such as authority and charisma (Bourdieu 1986). These forms of capital are all in relation with one another as they can be interchanged at different times and in various ways. This allows those who have capital, in its broadest sense, to dominate those who do not and to ensure that their position of control is maintained. In apartheid South Africa economic, cultural and symbolic capital functioned as powerful tools to maintain elitist racial rule.

South Africa has never had strong cultural capital in the classical sense that Bourdieu understood 'culture', which implies a consensus on worthy cultural constructions that have the capability to function as a common currency. I would rather argue that under apartheid the country was deeply divided between the dominant 'white' culture and the dominated 'black' culture. While these categories functioned as the defining markers the variants within 'white' and 'black' culture were masked and were misrepresented and misrecognised as

unified objects one against the other. With the end of apartheid the powerful racial definitions started to become impotent and the white – black division began to splinter into a multitude of cultural dispositions that had always simmered beneath the surface. DiMaggio (1979) and Lamont and Laureau (1988) caution that the extent to which Bourdieu's concept of a dominant cultural capital can be applied to a country where there is high social diversity like the United States and not strong high culture as in France, is limited.

With this caution in mind Bourdieu's idea of a single subjugating cultural capital needs to be re-thought in South Africa. If cultural capital is understood as 'legitimate knowledge of one kind or another' (Jenkins 2002: 85) then in the South African context we need to introduce knowledge of the various African cultural practices and religions as forms of cultural capital. For a *sangoma* (spiritualist and herbalist) who works in a *muti* (herbal medicines) shop on Diagonal Street in downtown Johannesburg her expert knowledge of African practices and cosmology can easily be transferable into economic capital as her clients come to seek her advice to heal their ailments. But this cultural capital would be valueless at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange just around the corner. Bourdieu would explain this by suggesting that the arenas of social interaction where struggles for monopolization are played out could be conceived of as 'fields'. 'Fields may be thought of as structured spaces that are organized around specific types of capital or combinations of capital,' (Swartz 1997:117). In the various fields of power in South Africa, from politics and economics through to religion, the historically, dominant (white) compositions of capital have started to crumble, and contesting forms of cultural and symbolic capital have begun

wrestling for prominence. This battle has been a critical component in the dislocation and identity struggle experienced by most of the women in my study. A further qualification to my use of the concept of culture comes from Claire Alexander (1996: 12) who explored black culture and identity in Britain and argued that '(t)he equation of black culture with 'racial' identity, which attributes 'blackness' a fixed and permanent status, precludes the possibility of internal definition or of individual negotiation.'⁴² She highlighted that culture was not an essential or fixed, traditional heritage but continually being re-created, re-invented and re-imagined by each individual who could be seen as part of a cohort (1996:13). Hall and Jefferson have defined 'culture' as:

that level at which social groups develop distinctive patterns of life, and give expressive form to their social and material life-experience. Culture is the way, the forms, in which groups 'handle' the raw material of their social and material existence (1976:10).

In this chapter I will show how the two churches in my study were re-creating different notions of African culture and throughout this work I will elaborate on the ways in which different individuals identified with these forms of culture. What I am suggesting is that we can speak of African culture, that it is a 'capital', a form of social power, but that there is not one thing called 'African culture' but multiple, shifting, African cultures, which different people engage with it in different ways.

⁴² Alexander (1996:12) extends Benson's paradigm and argues that in Britain 'where Asians have 'ethnicity', African-Caribbeans have 'race', a formulation consolidated by the long-standing belief in the cultural vacuity of black life.' This idea of black culture being equated with race has extended to the colonial understanding of Africans as not having a high culture or what Bourdieu would classify as cultural capital.

Negotiating African culture and its dislocation

Bourdieu maintained that it was in the family that the various forms of capital were passed on to the children, primarily by the mother. Most people who go to a *sangoma* or *nganga* (herbalist) will have learnt about their abilities to place curses on enemies or to heal people with *muti* or herbs, from their families. For healing from major illnesses it has traditionally been important for people to know who their ancestors were so that with the help of the *sangoma* they could make the right sacrifices that would appease the ancestors and ensure their protection. Most of the women in my study explained that they did not know very much about African traditional beliefs, who their ancestors were, or the practices at traditional family gatherings. Their parents had for various reasons not been able or available to pass this knowledge onto them and they experienced a sense of dislocation and disconnectedness from this form of capital. One of the primary reasons was that so many had no or little contact with their father and his family. In African cosmology the ancestors of both the mother and the father need to be honoured but it is the father's family with which the children have the most contact, take his name and celebrate with or ask his family's ancestors for help. This disconnectedness caused a degree of *angst* for many women.

Amongst the women I interviewed about 70% were expected to attend family traditional gatherings at some point. These included the slaughtering of an animal to appease or honour the ancestors. It was striking how little they knew about African cultural practices. Pastor Sono's wife, Gege, who was in her early 40's explained that her generation did not really know much about their cultural heritage and felt that this was a form of poverty.

If we knew what was going on in the African things then we would be able to give better guidance to young people. In African culture you don't question, you just follow, and that is why you miss out on understanding why something is done.

Mpho echoed this desire to learn more about her African culture but said she had only become interested in her heritage after becoming a committed Christian.

I am going to learn [about my African culture] from my grandparents and so they are calling us the 'why' generation because we are always asking why. My mother doesn't know much, she grew up in Soweto. Then I am also going to my uncles and asking them and they know so much about the culture and why we do this and that. Now that I am born again I understand why they had to make this separation from their culture in order to remain Christian (Mpho, 24, S, customer services manager, G.B.).

These views spoke of disconnectedness from a heritage that was slipping away. This disjointed relationship was embodied by Thembi's story of her birth.

My gran started to go to church before I was born, so she called me The Faith of Pentecost. I was the very first child born into the family that was born without *poquana*, the ritual blessing of the child. And they believed that if you don't do this then the child would die. So they didn't do it for me and I am still alive. I was the first never to go through that and then my mom was at a nursing home studying to be a nurse when she was pregnant and that was never allowed before. But they didn't kick her out. She was the very first nurse to be given maternity leave as a student (Thembi, 26, S, client liaison officer, G.B.).

Her story resonates with a sense of pride at having been born into a Christian family and the blessing that God bestowed onto her mother was understood in her being granted maternity leave. But there was also a clear break – she was

different from her mother, grandmother and all the women who went before her. The ritual bonds embodied in the *poquana* blessing and sacrifice made for the new baby were not made for her. As Christians Thembi's mother and grandmother had begun to reject certain cultural practices and so a ritual of belonging was broken for Thembi.

Changes in people's relationship to their heritage were explained by many of the younger women in this view expressed by Sarah. She believed that

we are westernising the culture – what I mean is that what is actually happening with us is that we are starting to look down on some of our cultural values and looking up at the white things. We are adopting the Western ways and we are kind of like wanting to westernise our cultural values (Sarah, 21, S, student, H.P.).

This lament that African culture was being westernised was alternatively balanced, generally by the older women who had lived in a family that was very traditional, with a more negative view of African culture. These women felt that they needed to 'stop our parents living in the old ways. The old ways said that it was alright for a man to be abusive to his wife,' (Alice, 42, M, domestic assistant, G.B.). The most general opinion of African culture was that certain parts were good and worth keeping but others were intrusive or abusive and should be abandoned. Lucy from His People summed up this consensus when she said –

What I do love about African culture is the *ubuntu* (sense of community spirit) thing. But you also have to temper that. People have no boundaries. They are too constrained by community and what the community is saying. And they are not looking at what is practical and what is realistic. They just come in and use your stuff and they demand that you do all these community things all the time.

She went on to conclude that -

I think the biggest thing that will take place as we move forward is the polarisation of black people. Because there will be very different perspectives.

There isn't one Africa (Lucy, 29, M, financial analyst, H.P.).

These contrasting views showed that the women's relationship to an African heritage or culture was complex. The sense of rootlessness spoke not only of a lack of capital in the larger social power struggle but also of a personal wrestle to shape their individual identities. Birgit Meyer in her work on Ghanaian Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches argued that these churches were so popular because they kept the African traditional beliefs and culture alive by demonising them. She suggested that they were 'remembering to forget' their African culture (1992; 1998; 1999). In South Africa His People and Grace Bible Church also demonise ancestor worship and preached that Africa was the 'dark continent' because it was held in the evil grip of ancestors, curses and people who were spiritually enslaved to demonic forces.

Unlike other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa's cultural knowledge and kinship networks from pre-colonial times were systematically disrupted and destroyed under apartheid (Greenstein 1995; 2003:12). These two churches did not keep traditional ancestor worship alive through a negative discourse but were actively trying to establish a new Christian African culture; one that homogenised the various tribal practices, was internationally acceptable, appealed to the wealthy and the poor, young and old and, in the case of His People at least, was racially inclusive. One of the reasons why these churches were attractive to the women I interviewed was because they offered them a way to re-shape their

relationship to African culture and their identity as African people. Just as Lucy pointed out earlier, there were several notions of 'African' and in both these churches a variety of relationships to African culture was being presented.

Both churches maintained that all forms of ancestor veneration were evil and not permitted. This did not mean that members were not allowed to attend funerals but they were not permitted to venerate the dead. Because ancestor worship was not accepted members were freed from the obligation and financial costs of attending family sacrifices honouring the dead. This allowed them to legitimate a break with their extended families and concentrate their resources on their own nuclear family. A similar trend has been noted by van Dijk amongst young Pentecostals in Malawi (1992) and Ghana (1997), Maxwell in his study of Pentecostals and poverty in Zimbabwe (1998) and Ojo in his work on Pentecostal prosperity in Nigeria (1996; 1988). From my interviews this break with African traditional beliefs was not just about legitimating a financially more lucrative and individualist life-style; it meant that the women were freed from the *angst* of unknown curses and anguish of not fulfilling their roles within a social and religious system from which they felt dislocated. The two churches helped to free women from this *angst* by opening up a different worldview in which the powers of the ancestors and curses could be vanquished by faith in Jesus Christ. They prevented a complete demonization of African culture by emphasising that certain aspects of generalised tribal South African social practices were good and overlapped with the Bible. This contrasted with what Meyer found in Ghana. In South Africa the government's rhetoric of the African Renaissance, of being 'proudly South African' and taking pride in a collective, homogenised, sanitised

African heritage was embraced and elaborated on in both churches. More generally this was part of a global characteristic of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity that seems to ‘nourish rather than corrode black identity’ (Burdick 1999: 109; Toulis 1997; ter Haar 1998).



Figure 6.2 The ‘proudly South African’ logo found on products made in SA.

The most notable concepts of African culture that both churches embraced were: *ubuntu* or community living and identity through community, respect for one’s elders, and remaining a virgin until marriage. Their rejection of aspects of African culture marked these churches as bounded communities, enclosed by rigid notions of purity and taboo (Douglas 1966), in which ancestor worship was regarded as something dangerous, which could bring the believer into contact with sin or pollution.

Romary Cream or Oreo

At this point it may be useful to ground the discussion once again in specific experiences of women I interviewed and return to the earlier cameos, where a further distinction between Norma and Mpho can be drawn, namely in their relationship to ‘being African’. For Norma being African was bound-up in a history of struggle. She was part of the generation who suffered interrupted

schooling as a result of the school-boycotts, heightened political violence and became labelled the 'lost generation'. In contrast Mpho saw African as an idea being marketed and celebrated in different ways, but not necessarily bound to skin colour, history or engagement with suffering. Norma talked about 'Romary Creams' and 'Oreos' – two different ways in which she and her contemporaries were trying to work out their identities.

In reference to black people the women explained that 'Romary Creams' look very much like 'Oreos', they too were well dressed in the latest fashions, had been to predominantly white schools and spoke English well and African languages poorly. They were also successful in the commercial world, drove expensive cars and lived or aspired to live in the suburbs; but their attitudes and values were different. As one woman I interviewed explained, 'It's about remembering where you come from My wealth is not just for me alone.' While 'Romary Creams' reject ancestor veneration they supported the idea of the community, the extended family and *lobola* (bride price). They wanted to sanitize their own involvement with African culture but not discard it. Cindy summed up a 'Romary Cream' approach when she said the

difference between me and another business person is that I will still go back to my background as a Sowetan because I don't feel better than everyone. I drive my little Tazz and I still identify myself as a black person and act as one. I am not like these (black) women that you see in Sandton who need the big car and the attitude. And when I service a client I do whatever has to be done. I have people working for me but I do all

the legwork. I sweep if it has to be done (Cindy, 24, S, events consultant, proprietor, G. B.).

On the other side of the continuum 'Oreos' were keen to discard any form of African culture that was not trendy. They were part of the Luxion Kulcha, (a play on location or township culture) a hedonistic, individualistic celebration of a new capitalist Africa. At Grace Bible church the majority of women I interviewed were 'Romary Creams' although the women assured me that many 'Oreos' came to the church because Grace had become such a symbol of success in the township. At His People less than half the women I interviewed were 'Romary Creams' and over half were 'Oreos' with little or no contact to the townships. The rest fell somewhere in the middle. These categories were not static and women moved between them, often striving to be an 'Oreo' as a teenager and twenty-something and becoming more like a 'Romary Cream' in their thirties. Both groups strove to create a de-mythologised form of African culture that was proudly South African and could be upheld in the global market; and each of these constructs was contributing something to the emerging South African identity. A church like Grace Bible church, more so than His People, embodied the values of the 'Romary Cream' and as such was developing a less pleasure-seeking alternative culture.

From the analysis of my fieldwork I would suggest that the 'Oreo' of the generations X and Y found a resonance with the larger Luxion Kulcha, which as a popular culture was consumed by these generational groups.⁴³ The more altruistic ideals of the 'Romary Cream' - who aimed to give something back to the township and get in touch with her 'natural' African self - were a less dominant

⁴³ For a more detailed discussion of Y culture see Nutall (2004).

symbolically construction but appealed to many of the Pentecostal-Charismatic women in my study. For these women their self-label 'Romary Cream' could be seen as an alternative to the dominant hedonistic culture.

Pete Ward has shown how in Charismatic churches in the United Kingdom 'a new culture of production developed where church life, worship and spirituality were contextualised within popular culture' (Ward 2003: 197). In contemporary Charismatic Christianity the

experience of baptism in the spirit and the charismatic gifts are connected to a series of individual and corporate expressions. These expressions then act as a system of representation and distinction, for those within the subculture (Ward 2003: 201).

This can be applied to South Africa where the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christians were linked into the vast local and global Charismatic media industry through which popular culture – in this case Luxion Kulcha, 'Oreos' and generation X – were reworked into a specific subculture that was more dominant at Grace Bible church than His People and which the women have referred as 'Romary Creams'. Members identified with this subculture through their particular taste/distinction of goods associated with this world. Central to both church cultures was their engagement with popular and traditional notions of African culture.



Figure 6.3 Popular 'African-style' clothes from Stoned Cherrie.

His People and the shaping of a modern African culture

At His People members were discouraged from paying *lobola* because this was regarded as a way in which women were bought and sold by men. Pastor Themba said

For us in the church this is a real problem. So they live together because of lobola but then they are living under condemnation because they are not living in a state that God has ordained. All to fulfil cultural expectations (Ps Themba, 28, S, pastor, H.P.).

In their teaching His People also paid little attention to South Africa's past struggles. Both black and white people were encouraged to leave behind their old life-styles and take on the new culture of Christianity. This Christian culture was

largely influenced by American Pentecostal and Evangelical teachings with a strong emphasis on the individual's vocation to realise their full potential and financial success in this world. The language of the church was similar to that of American motivational talks and encouraged everyone to look to the future, list their goals and achieve them with excellence. The church tried to inspire the members to mix racially, but while I attended the church, most of the members tended to stay separated in racially divided groups.

The fact that they were trying to be multiracial and were offering an African culture filtered through their Western Christianity made it more 'Oreo' in style and was one of the most appealing aspects of the church for the young women whom I interviewed. One of the youth pastors at His People said that she left Grace Bible church to come to His People because 'my vision was, I always like to mingle with other cultures, so the minute I read their mission statement I realised this is where I belong, you know, spiritually and all that,' (Grace, 26, S, assistant pastor, H.P.). His People not only had a vision of creating a multi-cultural church but also of re-building the nation of South Africa, helping to develop a new culture of Christian values. Women found this attractive and felt that by being part of the church they were actively able to do something towards re-shaping South Africa.

Almost all the women at His People said that membership for them had meant being freed from an African culture to embrace a more modern western life-style and to gain the sort of social and cultural capital that would help them to become successful in the corporate world. The masculine tone and vision of the church

meant that they placed a lot of emphasis on helping people develop their full potential and realise their purpose in life so that they could excel, becoming leaders in whatever field God was calling them into. Penny, one of the unpaid senior married pastors, explained that the church regarded one of its primary roles to be ‘preparing them for their working roles’ (Penny, 30, M, stay-at-home-mom, H.P.). To do this the church encouraged older members and students to mentor younger members or students. Much of this mentorship was around helping people establish their goals, ways to achieve these and to create good working relationships with their colleagues. Jennifer summed up this sentiment when she said

I was so frustrated, you know, I felt disadvantaged, vis-a-vis my peers who I felt had got a lot from their parents. My parents gave me love etc, but they weren’t able to equip me for the work place (Jennifer, 31, S, financial analyst, H.P.).

She felt that only at His People did she begin to get that ‘equipping’. This ‘equipping’ was about developing cultural and social capital which the church business network, dinner club⁴⁴ and social events all fostered.

Bourdieu argued that the petit bourgeois had limited economic, social and cultural capital. But what they did have was a moral guarantee of reliability, hard work and sobriety.

In social exchanges, where other people can give real guarantees, money, culture or connections, it can only offer moral guarantees; (relatively) poor in economic, cultural and social capital it can only “justify its pretensions”, and get the chance to realize them, by paying in sacrifices, privations, renunciations, goodwill, recognition, in short, virtue (Bourdieu 1989: 333).

⁴⁴ Different couples hosted sit-down three course dinners in their homes. For many young students this was one of their first experiences of formal dinners in a very western setting.

This may go some way to explain the ethic of excellence instilled in both churches. By belonging to these churches the drive the women I interviewed had toward upward mobility was legitimated in a masculine rhetoric of ambitious hard work that helped them to strengthen the only negotiating power they had in social exchanges – namely their virtue.

Many of the women in my study had been part of a church in a township and joined His People when they were students living on campus. What appealed to them about His People was the teaching of the church, which they found academic and challenging. The teaching was more relevant to the issues they were dealing with at university. In many sermons I heard the pastors engage with popular philosophical concepts and showed how these could be understood or refuted from a Christian perspective. Unlike ministers in the townships some of the young women also felt that the pastors talked from their own experience and mistakes.⁴⁵ Most women appreciated the fact that the teachings were ‘in the Word’ in comparison to the mainline churches which were considered less biblically based. Unlike mainline township churches they felt that at His People ‘its all for us and we can do what we like. We can wear what we like and we can play our music and everything’ (Ntokaso, 20, S, student, H.P.). Here they were free to express themselves not only in their worship and relationship to God but in the way they related to popular culture and what elements of the culture they took on. For example, they could wear nail polish, slacks and listen to popular music.

⁴⁵ This view was not shared by everyone and one of the common criticisms was that the pastors and their wives presented themselves as having the perfect families.

Grace Bible Church and shifting African cultures

At Grace Bible Church the emphasis on African culture and the collective past of non-white South Africans was very different. A clear attempt was being made to construct a general urban African culture that was inclusive of all the different tribal groups and languages in South Africa. The church supported *lobola* and at all services the forth-coming weddings and funerals were announced so that people could attend them, as was customary in African communities. In his sermons Pastor Sono showed how Christian principles related to African values and he encouraged people to be proud of their heritage. Several of the women explained to me that African culture and Christian culture were really very close.

Vuyo said

you don't have to adjust a lot to Christianity. One of the things that makes African culture is respect your elders, and being part of a community, that is all in the Bible (Vuyo, 29, S, manager in a municipal department, G.B.).

Mpho explained that she did not think that the church was losing their African culture because the songs are very African,

and Pastor Mosa is stressing that we are African and that we don't forget our culture. We have a yearly African festival on heritage day and we all dress up in our cultural stuff and we learn about our culture. Last year we had someone from Zululand and they taught about the isiZulu culture (Mpho, 24, S, customer service manager, G.B.).

Women said they found this appealing, they felt they were learning about their culture and gaining something that they had lost. The church was showing them how to engage with their culture without having to take on the parts that caused them anxiety either because they could not fulfil them or because these practices

jarred with the images of themselves they were trying to establish as sophisticated, modern, career women.

To these cosmopolitan women a main attraction of Grace Bible church was the teaching, which they found relevant and helpful. It was based on 'the Word' explaining how passages of scripture could be applied to everyday life. They said they used what they learnt to improve their relationships with their spouses or children. Much of Pastor Sono's sermons was about encouraging people, and women found this inspiring. They said they came to church week after week to be 're-energised'.

Behind the urbane and animated exteriors of these women lay many stories of pain. Healing was an important aspect of the church in their lives. One woman said that while she was still at school she became ill

and the Spirit said I must go to Grace and it said I will be alright. Then the pastor said there was a young girl having problems breathing . . . and he prayed for me and I was healed so I stayed there (at Grace) (Ps Onika, 39, D, police captain & self-supporting pastor, G.B.).

Another woman who was struggling with the pressures of her job as a social worker said

I knew and I saw that those who are born again would get their problems solved and they would get healed so I thought maybe there was something in this being born again. I was so tired when I first went there and now when I look back I thank God for having helped me through all this (Tumi, 30, S, social worker, G.B.).

For many women searches for emotional healing had been central in their commitment to a Christian life.

Emotions in the process of church affiliation

Diane Reay (2004) highlighted the importance of emotions in social analysis and she critiqued Bourdieu's study of the family by showing that he left no room for emotions in his work. She proposed that we recognise emotional capital, which in her analysis was intimately linked to gender and class. Women do more emotional work within the family and so have been the carriers of emotional capital passing it on to their children. In her analysis of working class families she exposed poverty as a leading contributor to emotional distress arguing that emotional capital did not thrive in sites of scarcity. Reay's concept was an important extension of the notion that poverty can take various forms.

For many women one of the greatest sources of emotional poverty was the broken relationships they had with their fathers. An undertone to many women's life-stories was a sense of worthlessness and inferiority. This was due to a number of reasons but some of the most common were that their fathers had walked out on them as children, that growing up in apartheid South Africa they were told that black children were inferior to white children and that they could not hope to achieve much with their lives because they came from disadvantaged homes. Many women spoke of feeling overwhelmed and renewed when they came to realise that God loved them. Vuyo (29, S, manager in municipal branch, G.B.) whose father had left her and her mother when she was small said that when she became a Christian she stopped thinking of herself as fatherless and started to say

that she had a father – God, ‘the best father any child can have’. Belinda said she came from a broken home where neither of her parents wanted her and she spent her life living with aunts and grandparents. She said ‘I didn’t care if people loved me and I was hurting them. Now I am trying to be nice to people and be loving and care for them’ (Belinda, 31, S, lawyer, G.B.). Her transformation began when one of her friends took her to Grace Bible church. She started to realise that God loved her no matter what her past was and that he was her ultimate father and mother who would always care for her. Not all women came from broken homes. Marie who grew up with both her parents said that in her family people did not express love. In her second year at university, once she had been at His People for a year she phoned home one day and ‘oh gosh, I said to my father over the phone I love you. This was the very first time, then he was taken aback.’ Marie (20, S, student, H.P.) said she did not think it was due to cultural upbringing but rather because her father always seemed troubled and distant that she found it difficult to express love. Reay (2004; 2005) would explain this by pointing to the strain of poverty that left little emotional energy in the family with which to express love.

Both at His People and Grace Bible church, women told me how they had ‘met God’ or ‘encountered His grace’ while they were in a place of emotional anguish. Susan (22, S, receptionist, G.B.) came to faith after having tried to commit suicide because she could not deal with her sense of abandonment after her father had left her and her step-siblings in poverty with their mother. Women who had friends at His People and Grace Bible church often joined these churches because they had an emotional connection with the churches through their friends. While driving to

her grandmother's house to help the family prepare for a funeral Tumi told me how she had been hijacked, her car stolen and her leg broken. While she was crawling to a nearby house to get help she said 'I really felt that God was talking to me and there were angels around me' (Tumi, 32, M, human resource manager, G.B.). She felt that he had saved her life and after this she began to attend Grace Bible church regularly.

Teenage pregnancies were frequent in Soweto with a lot of conflicting emotions attached to them. For a few women the experience of having an unplanned child was a turning point and one that brought them into a relationship with God. Belinda, whom I mentioned earlier was a single mom at Grace Bible church and worked as a lawyer. She told me the moving story of her decision not to abort her child.

I came to Grace even though I wasn't a member. Then God really ministered to me, this was while I was pregnant. I knew it wasn't God's fault it was me who hadn't lived right. I came from a broken family and there was no love. Then I was asking God how am I going to love this child and raise it. Then I got a revelation because you haven't loved anyone and then you haven't been given unconditional love so this might be your opportunity to learn about love. I used to be such a fighting person who didn't worry about being killed. Then I decided to have the baby and I called him Welcome (Belinda, 31, S, lawyer, G.B.).

The stories in their broader context

The various stories I have highlighted speak of dislocation and a deprivation of love, emotional support and strained economic, cultural and social capital. They also tell of spiritual experiences, a sense of hope and despite limited

circumstances they describe achievement and success. In these stories both the social context or structure of people's lives and their own actions or agency within these contexts were in a dialectical relationship. In South Africa black women have only recently had opportunities to study and work professionally. The women who were part of the X generation were the first generation of black women to have equal opportunities in law with men and white women. Their experiences of university life and social dislocation were stories of rapid social change. In their twenties they experienced what their parents could not dare to hope for them when they first went to school. The Y generation, in contrast, went to school in the heady days of Mandela's release and premiership of South Africa – a place where all things seemed possible. For both the generations the larger social context in which they lived and became members of their churches was important because it gave them opportunities other women in South Africa did not have at the same time socially dislocating them and making them leading agents of change. While the macro structures of the political, economic and ideological powers in South Africa have affected the lives of these women the arrangement of the habitus and fields in their lives also impacted their actions. They determined part of what Gadamer (1998) called 'horizons' – that trajectory which the individual can see, understand and within which they feel able to engage with the social and philosophical. Gadamer's horizons were established to explain how individuals think, and part of this is an ability to think about one's own social actions. Bourdieu has been helpful in giving us a language with which to contextualise the deprivation that many women experienced, but he is unable to adequately explain why some women chose to become members of His People or

Grace Bible church while their class mates and neighbours from the same habitus did not.

The interviews showed how women made choices about their religious affiliation because they had a particular religious experience, and the language of His People or Grace Bible church helped them to make sense of that. Alternatively they felt disorientated in the unfamiliar environment of university or work and the church offered them a place of belonging making it easier for them to operate more effectively in these situations by empowering them with the sort of cultural and social capital valued in their new milieu. Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity has been regarded as a vehicle for personal change offering a new way of engaging with the modern and encountering the sacred (Van Dijk 1992; Van Dijk 1997; Shaul and Cesar 2000; Corten and Marshall-Frantani 2001; Martin 2002; Maxwell 2005). These churches created order out of disorder, for the individual, community and family and they helped to develop a sense of community as well as individual identity (Hunt 2000). McGuire captured this most aptly when she recognised that Pentecostal-Charismatic teaching gave believers ‘a sense of borrowed power’ through which they could understand and control their world (1982: 8). She explained that

the “discovery” of new sources of power by religious movements can be understood as an attempt to restore a sense of order and meaning in an individual’s life (McGuire 1982: 8).

Part of this empowering and re-shaping process has been a reformulation of social relations on generational and gender lines according to which patriarchal religion and social norms are overtly challenged (Brusco 1995; Maxwell 1995). Others

have noted that Pentecostal-Charismatic churches have not challenged these stereotypes but only offered women more social power when dealing with their husbands (Gill 1990). The women in my study were attracted to the strong masculine leaders who gave their men firm principles according to which they should care for their wives and families. They liked the fact that every individual was responsible for their own spirituality and that women were not expected to be the only voice of faith and morality in the home. To them, the masculine tone and principles of leadership, power, success and achievement were appealing. This masculinization of Christianity attracted not only men but women as well. They felt that they belonged to a family, which in their eyes was 'functional' because it was headed by a strong man.

In post apartheid South Africa a plethora of Christian movements, denominations and sects have emerged. The interviews showed that many of the women made a 'subjectively rational' choice to join one of these churches (Stark and Finke 2000). They felt that becoming a member of these churches was 'good' or advantageous for them, but joining was not a rational decision on their part – rather an emotive and spiritual one. They did not randomly happen to walk into church; and no one was born into either church.⁴⁶ I described some of the profound spiritual experiences they had. These were not narrow rational choices, in the classic sense of rational choice theory but choices made through transcendental experiences and for altruistic reasons.⁴⁷ Jerolmack and Porpora (2004) argue against rational choice in religion maintaining that all decisions to

⁴⁶ I follow Beckford (1999) and Ellison & Sherkat (1995) who in various circumstances argue that within social structural constraints rational choices can and are made.

⁴⁷ See for example Waerness (1984) who suggests that choices about caring are rational but not rational in the narrow conception of rationality.

join religious organisations are made out of religious experiences and religious emotions. As I have shown, for many women this was true but not for all. Some made choices about their religious affiliation based on a desire to increase their cultural capital or to fit in when other organisations rejected them.

Conclusion

Margaret Archer (Archer 2000; Archer 2004; Archer & Collier et al. 2004) has proposed that people have an ongoing internal conversation in which they critique the world in which they find themselves and make realistic plans about negotiating their path through it to achieve their desired ends. They are neither blown about by social structures nor do they only function from points of rational deliberation. Through these conversations they develop their own sense of self. While this goes some way to explain the balance between structure and agency, many women made choices that were also at least partly inspired by the charisma of a leader and his message. Weber (1946) explored different forms of leadership and highlighted the power of charismatic leadership.

I have highlighted generational differences between women in their twenties and thirties, but in my analysis of their conversion stories and experiences of committing to either church there was no clear generational variability as for example Furseth (2005) found in her generational study of Christian women in Norway. The differences in the women's church affiliation was related to their aspirations to be 'Oreos' or 'Romary Creams'. Grace Bible church had a more pronounced 'Romary Cream' culture while His People – with its ambitious personal achievement message attracted more 'Oreos'. Conversion and joining a

religious group is a gradual process that takes place over several stages (McGuire 1977; Downton 1980; Jules-Rosette 1987; Smith 1990; Brereton 1991; Horton 1993; Stromberg 1993; Russel 1994; Bryant 1999; Poewe 1999; Rambo and Farhadian 1999; Engelke 2004) and often involves members switching churches (Cleary 2004). On the whole people convert at a early stage in adult life seeking to find the best match between ‘their religious skills and the context in which they produce religious commodities’ (Iannaccone 1990: 313). Religious capital being ‘familiarity with a religion’s doctrines, rituals, traditions, and members’ (Iannaccone 1990: 299). In the next chapter I will explore how the religious commitment of the women I interviewed developed and affected their work and following that, their social and family life.

Chapter 7

Professional Women and the Message of Purpose

Introduction

Much of the literature about women in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches explores their role in the leadership of these churches (Lawless 1988; Wallace 1991; Wallace 1992; Nesbitt 1997), their participation in these churches (Gilkes 1985; Blumhofer 1995; Dempster 1995; Beaman-Hall and Nason-Clark 1997; Winter, Lummis et al. 2001), relations to the patriarchal religious ideals of these churches (Brusco 1986; Rose 1987; Cucchiari 1990; Stacey and Gerard 1990; Martin 1998; Martin 2001) and why women who are in professional careers choose to belong to these churches. Manning (1999), Brasher (1998) Bendroth (1993) and Ammerman (1987;1994; 1997) concluded that while these women claimed to be anti-feminist in religious terms they were not so in the secular corporate world. Here they believed that women could do any job and hold positions of senior leadership, but in the home only the husband could be head of the family. Like Hunter (1983; 1987), Rose (1987) and Stacey (1990) they argued that the most contested space was in the home where women were supposed to play traditional submissive roles and where they also wanted their husbands to take on more 'liberated' roles helping them with childcare and housework. Women and the family have therefore been the main area of focus, and little research has been done into the relationship between women's faith and their working careers.

Here I will examine the relationship between women's religious practices and their careers and in the following two chapters I aim to explore the relationship

between religion and the family. Research on Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity more generally highlights how membership can broadly be linked to social and economic upward mobility. In recent studies in Africa (Van Dijk 1992; Ojo 1996; Van Dijk 1997; Marshall-Fratani 1998; Meyer 1998a) and Latin America (Glazier 1980; Martin 1990; Stoll 1990; Cook 1994; Lehmann 1997) research linked upward mobility with the puritan life-style that members adhere to. But no studies have been published that examine the relationship between church membership and career success taking the argument either beyond the puritan life-style explanation or focusing particularly on professional women, work and church. I propose to detail the relationship between women's involvement at His People and Grace Bible and their work, suggesting that these two churches helped women negotiate the various forms of corporate power to which their rising mobility exposed them. Going beyond previous research I hope to show that for the professional women in my study their religious involvement affected their working life beyond inspiring them to adhere to a puritan life-style. These churches actively encouraged and equipped their members to become leaders in their fields. It was their churches' theology of 'purpose' and 'potential' that impacted on how these women viewed their jobs and coped with the demands of the work place.

This chapter begins with background into the work possibilities open to women and the literature about women and work in South Africa. Through a description of one young woman's life some of the complexity experienced in the changing neo-liberal South Africa will set the stage for a more detailed discussion of the difficulties and opportunities faced by professional women. The generational difference between professional women emerges again. Most women experienced

emotional stress in coping with their work. I intend to unpack this in more detail, as these churches not only improved their life chances at work, but also assisted them in coping with the demands of their work environments.

A background to women and work in South Africa

Under apartheid, sexual and racial discrimination condemned black women to the most disadvantaged social group (Bernstein 1985: 7). The work possibilities open to them were limited to agricultural labour, factory workers, domestic assistants, petty trade and low level administrative, educational or medical support work (Bernstein 1985; Lawson 1985; Marks 1994). Most women remained in the 'homelands'⁴⁸ where they lived with their children, while the men went to the industrial centres to earn meager wages as migrant labourers. Families were expected to live off the produce women grew in the homelands (Bernstein 1985: 8-11). In these homeland villages women built strong social gender support networks and subtly challenged the patriarchal system taking on most of the day-to-day family decisions (Donaldson 1997).

Expanding on Deborah Gaitskell's (1983a) overview, the literature on women and work in South Africa can be divided into five periods. First, the period from 1900 to 1950, in which much of the research was anthropological with a few sociological studies. These studies proposed that in pre-colonial Africa women had a less patriarchal system to contend with than their Victorian counterparts. After the Second World War and until the 1960s a second body of work emerged detailing the role of women, as shebeen queens, church matrons, matrifocal

⁴⁸ The homelands were made up of only 13.7% of South Africa's land which meant that the 'farms' that previously disadvantaged men owned and women worked were generally not large enough to be financially successful.

households, and young women who went to the cities to be 'free'. Being 'queen of the home' was regarded as the ideal, but little consideration was given to the political implication of this ideal. The third period from the 1960s to the 1980s critiqued this ideal and saw women in the context of their class and national struggles. Much of this work was part of the 1970s broader 'revisionist' scholarship that viewed society from a Marxist perspective and pushed for a revival of working-class militancy. Scholarship began to engage seriously with the political, economic and social realities of everyday life for women in the Third World (see for example Lindsay 1980; Hay and Stichter 1984; Stichter and Parpart 1988).

In South Africa the gender and racial oppression of black women was examined by Cock (1980) who highlighted the plight of black women working as domestic servants under apartheid and Kinsman (1983) who showed that the altered socio-economic system of African peasant farmers, introduced under colonialism, forced women into a position of subordination in which they worked the fields their men owned. Walker (1982) provided one of the first full length examinations of women's politics, rights and social groupings in South Africa. The 1980s saw heightened political violence and in this climate a fourth period emerged in which the clear-cut Marxist and second wave feminist ideologies were critiqued.⁴⁹ Bozzoli (1983) and Wells (1983) spurred a growing sensitivity to the complex nexus of relations that needed to be faced in feminist thought, namely, the social construction of race and gender as categories, the material conditions

⁴⁹ Brydon and Chant (1989) argued that 'gender inequality' was incorporated into development work both ideologically and practically, these disadvantaged women as their material conditions were not the only things that gave meaning to their lives. The study recorded a whole variety of activities that made up women's lives and showed that this gave a more balanced picture of the needs, strengths and hopes of women.

accompanying social constructions and women's consciousness about the conditions that affected them⁵⁰.

With the end of apartheid came a shift in research interests and a fifth period began, which continues to the present. During this period concepts like 'gender', 'women', 'men', 'motherhood' have been deconstructed, and the impact of social, political and economic structures on the lives of individuals has been questioned arguing that the agent herself purposively negotiates her own life strategy within the macro structures in which she finds herself⁵¹ (White 1990; Bozzoli 1991; Schmidt 1992; Jeater 1993). These writers moved away from an analysis centred on patriarchal gender oppression and argued that women held a more nuanced social position in which they had degrees of agency over their micro circumstances if not over the macro structures that affected their lives.

Bell and Nkomo (2001), and Romero (1998) have produced overviews of the numbers of black and white women in the various job sectors during the 1990s and early 2000s. They showed that white women had gained more economically than black women and that as a cohort black women still had the smallest representation in professional positions in South Africa. In general, the areas where previously disadvantaged women found work between 1994 and 2004 were in the informal sector and domestic work (Casale, Muller et al. 2004). Women generally have gained little from the 'feminisation of the market place' which the new government has tried to impose through Affirmative Action (AA)

⁵⁰ Simms and Malveaux (1986) gave one of the first detailed explorations of the status of a cross section of black women.

⁵¹ In Southern African studies more generally Meena's (1992) edited collection was an important work.

programmes (Casale 2004). Very little research has been done analysing the entry of previously disadvantaged women into professional careers either qualitatively or quantitatively. Naidoo's (1997) and Mathur-Helm's (2004) more recent research into women in management in South Africa showed that while black women were the racial and gender group climbing the occupational ladder most quickly – their move into higher level management jobs has been frustrated by cultural and social barriers, 'therefore their representation is lacking' (Mathur-Helm 2004: 330). In this chapter I will explore this critical area in more detail contributing new qualitative data to this discussion. There has been even less research into the relationship between work and religion. But in one of the few studies in this area Godsell (2000) found that generally in South Africa black family networks did not support entrepreneurship but rather expected material resources to be used to support the extended family and traditional practices. Black entrepreneurs and people with ambition have therefore been forced to find strategic networks other than the family that would help them commercially.

A story of economic success

Mmachidi, a bubbly 24 year old, who was brimming with self-confidence in tight jeans, a smart jacket, high-heeled boots and braided hair believed that the stuffy old white men in her office needed a wake-up call. She was also realistic about all the multiple versions of African culture on display in the townships and shopping malls. She organised an outing to one of the famous African themed restaurants in Soweto – Wandi's one Sunday after church. I was invited to join the group of about 25 young professionals who enjoyed the afternoon but were

keenly aware that they were taking part in a social play on African culture.

Mmachidi sagely commented that

they (black and white business people) are learning about our culture like Lakotla (cultural ritual of group discussion) and that this can help them be more profitable. So now everyone is on board, but only so long as it ensures profit.

Like a restaurant that has an African theme is just using this to make money. So African is used to make money.

Born in the early 1980's she went to a multiracial school at a time when Mandela was being released from prison and every billboard was telling us to be proud of the New South Africa. Mmachidi studied engineering at Wits on a bursary from one of the large mining houses. Once she completed her basic training she worked for the company in their London office for a year. She saw herself as a woman of the world, whose identity was in her values and not problematically bound to her skin colour or history. Like other generation Y women she mixed her languages, her clothing styles and the locations where she lived, worked and went out with friends; mutating with ease from one setting to the other and continuously picked up or discarded elements of these different cultural milieus.

When I asked her what she thought of the sermons at Grace Bible church she said that she had learnt a lot from them but like the other young people at the restaurant she complained that Pastor Sono 'went on a bit too much about apartheid and all that they had suffered.' She said,

I know it was hard but it's over and they need to move on. We can't sit here going on about the past all the time. Also people must get on and help themselves. There is so much happening in this country you don't have an

excuse for not getting ahead. Sell fruit - do something (Mmachidi, 24, S, chemical engineer, G.B.).

Finding work

While Mmachidi glibly claimed that it was easy to find work, the reality in South Africa was more complex. With the exception of Tembi (26, S, client liaison officer, H.P.) who had a B.A. degree from the University of Cape Town, all the women I interviewed at His People, both the black and white women who had tertiary education, found it easy to find work. About a third of the women at His People had found their current jobs through a member in the church.

At Grace Bible church the picture was different. Those women who had degrees from good universities found work easily and were quickly fast tracked along their careers. The women who had less education had a variety of experiences. Cindy (24, S, events co-ordinator, proprietor, G.B.) did not complete her degree but began her own business and was enjoying growing financial success when I met her. Vuyo (29, S, area manager in the municipality, G.B.) had completed her degree but had not been able to qualify because she could not afford to pay her fees. For two years she struggled to find a job but once she got clerical work in the licensing department of the Gauteng Municipality she quickly moved into a managerial position. Belinda (31, S, lawyer, G.B.), Tumi (32, M, human resource manager, G.B.) and Gladys (33, M, lawyer, proprietor, G.B.) had degrees from the previous 'bantu' universities and struggled to find work. Belinda and Gladys followed Pastor Sono's advice and did voluntary work for a year to gain job experience, which helped them find work. Tumi (31, M, H.R. manager, G.B.), Caro (26, S, business analyst, G.B.) and Letty (26, M, journalist, G.B.) spent two

or more years doing temporary clerical work before finding positions in their chosen career fields. Another three women in their twenties had been retrenched from new start-up companies that had encountered financial problems. These women all found work again within six months.

Only 10% of the women I interviewed had found jobs through contacts they had at Grace Bible church. While I was at Grace two announcements were made on behalf of companies looking for junior trainee staff. In compliance with the law these companies were doing the bare minimum of alternative recruitment and expected to hire through the church because they believed that the young people from the church were more hard working, honest and had a better attitude than young people generally. Members from both companies' recruitment teams belonged to Grace Bible church, according to Wonda (42, M, accounts manager, GB).

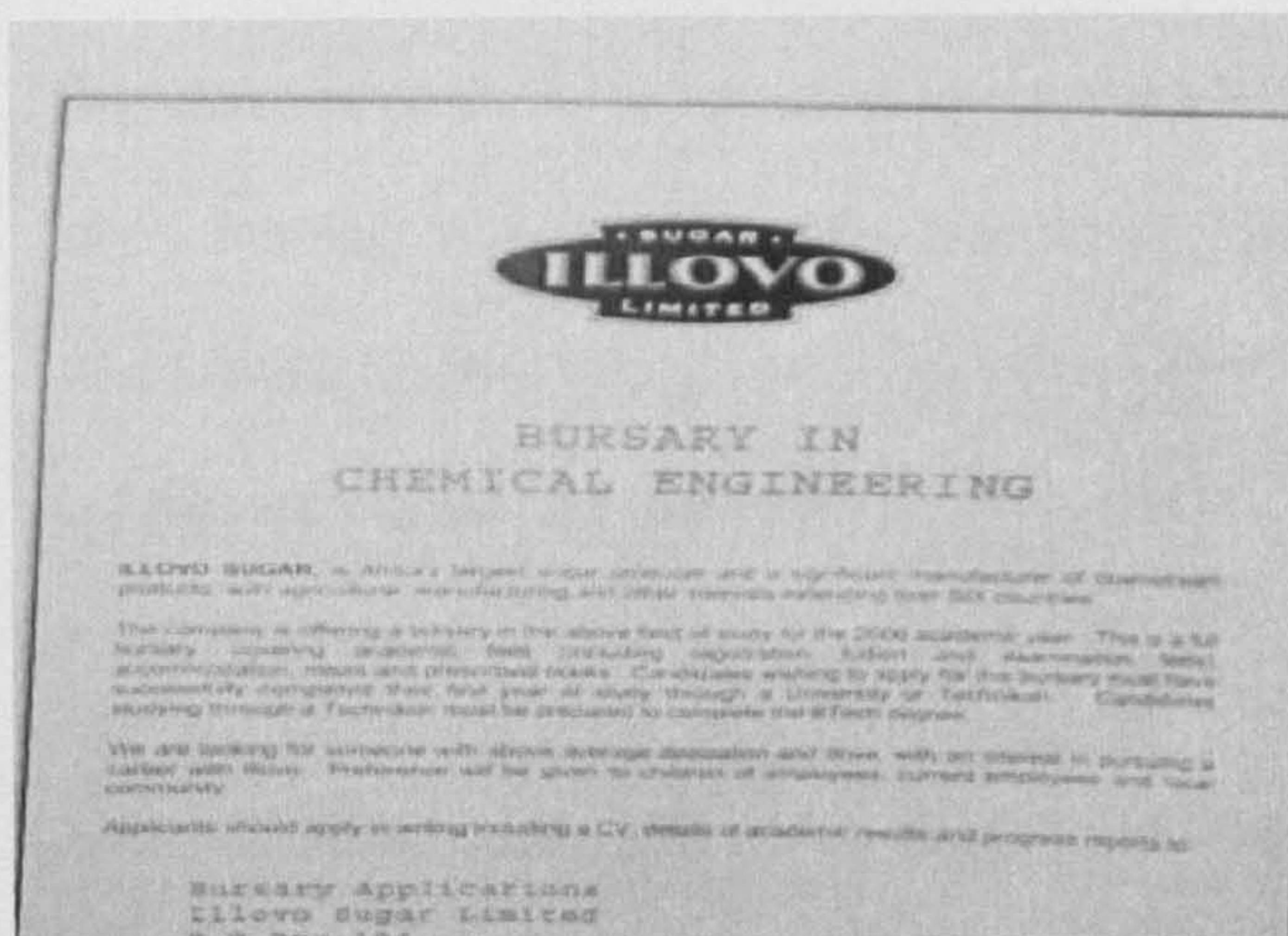


Figure 7.1 An advertisement for a bursary displayed at Grace Bible church.

The teaching and emotional support that both churches gave their members helped them cope with difficulties they experienced. According to the women I interviewed this was the most important impact of the churches on their lives.

The above overview shows that having received good educations these women were able to find jobs comparatively easily and were receiving promotions quickly, yet this required them to fit into corporate culture, something that many women struggled with and which I will analyse in some detail.

Fitting into the corporate culture

For the women in my study their age, race, gender and background all affected how they coped with their jobs, but one of the marked differences between the women was how easily they did or did not fit into the corporate cultures of their various companies. In the cameos that I drew, Norma, Mpho and Mmachidi were typical of their contemporaries in their relationship to the business world. Norma the older woman struggled to fit in. She felt unsure of what to wear, what food to eat at a restaurant and how to conduct herself in board meetings. Like 80% of the women in her age group who attended His People and whom I interviewed she said that one of the most appealing things about her church was that it had given her mentoring by business people, who were older than her and usually white. She felt that this had helped her to learn about corporate, white culture. Mmachidi on the other hand had not expressed any anxiety about the social and cultural dynamics at work.

Norma began working the year that South Africa had its first democratic elections. In this environment the economic and cultural capital of the country was firmly held by white South Africans. Bourdieu would explain her dislocation by showing that the apartheid struggle and township family habitus from which she came had given her the cultural capital of an education but not the dispositions, style and taste that were equally important cultural markers for the

successful assimilation into white corporate South Africa. As Reay (2004) has shown, cultural capital is primarily passed on in the home. Mmachidi like her contemporaries had a very different response to the work place. True to the dispositions of the generation Y she did not feel alienated but brought a strong sense of her own style and identity with her into the work place. I would argue that this popular culture, Luxion Kulcha (location culture), has gained dynamic symbolic power over the last few years. Symbolic power being ‘defined in and by a determinate relationship between those who exercise this power and those who undergo it – that is to say, in the very structure of the field in which belief is produced and reproduced’ (Bourdieu 1977: 117).

Bourdieu’s theoretical work is underscored by the notion that ‘stratified social systems of hierarchy and domination persist and reproduce intergenerationally without powerful resistance and without the conscious recognition of their members’ (Swartz 1997: 6). Jenkins (2002), Swartz (1996) and Calhoun (1993; 1994) have all pointed out that Bourdieu does not deal adequately with social change or social movements. South Africa’s society has been undergoing a marked reshaping as the collectives from the fringes, the unemployed and working classes have been moving towards the centre of power not as individuals, as Bourdieu theorises,⁵² but as a collective group with their own language, music and *Weltanschauung*. They have been forging a new habitus for themselves and beginning to dominate certain fields like fashion, media and entertainment particularly with moves like Luxion Kulcha. In South Africa, this cultural revolution has been taking place over the last fifteen years, and only in recent

⁵² Bourdieu (1989) suggests that only individuals become upwardly mobile and not whole communities. See Swartz (1997: 172) for a detailed critique on Bourdieu’s limited engagement with social movements.

years have the fruits begun to disseminate through corporate society. The older women in my study began working when the corporate world was still completely dominated by white, male English or Afrikaner culture and therefore they experience a far higher degree of dislocation. The younger women both from His People and Grace Bible church entered a work place in which there were already a few black and several white women holding senior positions. This was a world in which black African business people were proving themselves and where dynamic new inventions of 'African' culture were proving profitable and acceptable as Mmachidi's story illustrated.

Emotional stress of work

Amongst the women of generation X there was a real sense that their successful careers had cost them emotional stability, relationships and a degree of happiness. The younger women were brimming with hope and confidence that they would not sacrifice their emotional lives to their careers. Carmen believed that

we are creating a society of young highly successful but over stressed black professional women who only excel in one area and become alienated in their own communities. They are like lost souls. Alienation is very difficult emotionally, never belonging (Carmen, 30, S, physiotherapist, H.P.).

Commenting on the 20 and 30 something young women in Grace Bible church Pastor Gege explained that

because they are such a success in other areas they are hero worshipped and no one tells them that in this you are missing this and here you are doing that wrong. So it's so unfortunate and they have no one speaking into (parenting/ mentoring) their lives. Everyone looks up to them, they have money and transport. But even if you (the parents) have a different opinion but because they are in a powerful

position you don't say anything. Their social life is not up to scratch if I may put it that way. They are very lonely (Ps Gege, 42, M, senior pastor, G.B.).

Many parents of these young women felt inadequate in confronting them or giving them guidance. A few older successful women at Grace Bible church did not feel intimidated⁵³. At one women's conference the guest speaker was a medical doctor of about 45 who had three children, a husband, a busy practice and an even busier preaching schedule. This dynamic woman spoke powerfully, challenging working women to find a way to balance the demands of both home and work (Dr Eva Seobi, Women of Destiny Conference, 19 June 2004). Her teaching echoed that of His People - the family should not suffer because the mother is working. While these two churches were offering young women advice, support and guidance, they were also adding to their stress by demanding that they be leaders in the workplace and attentive mothers and wives whose children were well adjusted and whose husbands did not stray.

Due to their success these women were distanced both emotionally and physically from their families. Their success also affected how they related to their previous school friends and young men. Cindy explained that

I don't interact with my age-mates. I deal with older men and they are mainly between 35 and 45. My age mates are very intimidated by me. My peers at church won't even look at me because of who I am. And I always hear that people say that I am this and that. But it doesn't really bother me, I believe that God has a partner for me and he will come in due time (Cindy, 24, S, events consultant, proprietor, G. B.).

⁵³ These women were part of a small group of women who were in their 40s and 50s and had been part of the ANC underground resistance or in exile under apartheid. With the creation of the new ANC government and the strong AA policies some of these women quickly rose to positions of political and corporate prominence.

The dislocation - no longer being a part of the community where they grew up - and struggling to find men they wanted to marry was possibly the hardest thing for these auspicious women. Zanele, a beautifully groomed, softly spoken woman of 28, nearly started to cry when I asked her about stress at work. She had recently started going for counselling because she felt close to a nervous breakdown. In a short working career of 7 years she had become branch manager in one of SA's largest banks. According to her, women were experiencing the sort of stress she had gone through because

you have to work more than twice as hard, because you are black and young and a woman. And you put in such a lot of effort and then when you think you have nearly arrived it has taken such a toll on you. I have been asking what is all this for? I have all this money but I can't meet anyone because the men are all too scared of me and think I don't need them. All we want is someone to love us, a family to come home to. You want to take advantage of all the opportunities in SA but that is also demanding. So now I could give my children a better life but how do I get a family? (Zanele, 28, S, branch manager of bank, G.B.).

As Christianity was a central part of the lives of these women I asked them whether they were not able to meet eligible men at their churches. In the next chapter I will address this issue in more detail but for now I shall simply report that the women who were less successful found it easier to meet men as men found them less intimidating and they were not looking for men who had achieved as much as they had.

At His People 75% of the black women I interviewed found their work emotionally very stressful while 50% of the women at Grace Bible described real

emotional anxiety about their work. All these women were over 27 years of age. Of these women 80% had achieved a managerial position and were earning over R15, 000.00. This was in contrast with Beatty (1996), and Sears and Galambos (1992) who found that managerial and professional women in America also found their jobs emotionally stressful at times, but that this stress was less than what women in traditional female jobs experienced – who had less control over the methods and outcome of their work. For the women in my study, their stress came from the pressure of the family expectations, their own ambition, the fact that their achievement had alienated them from their communities and families, that at a young age they were given so much responsibility and that in their late twenties and early thirties 80% of them were still single. Of these women 30% were in counselling or had been for counselling or had stress related illnesses.

Jobs like teaching, nursing and social work were amongst the worst paid professions in South Africa yet they all required a 4 year degree or diploma. Women in these professions found that there was a lot of pressure from family and friends that having a degree they should be earning enough money to comfortably afford a car, house and childcare. In reality they struggled to meet car repayments on small second hand cars, and those not married lived with their parents. This made them feel inadequate and disappointed that their hard work was not being rewarded. In their churches prosperity was regarded as a sign of God's blessing and so these women began to doubt their faith. Was there something wrong with them that God was not 'blessing' them? Tumi (30, S, social worker, G.B.) who had an MBA and social work degree had started to go for counselling a year before I met her. She was struggling to cope with the

emotional demands of her job and the sense of failure that she had because although she worked hard she was earning less than her friends who were not social workers.

The churches both added to these burdens and offered women help in three main ways. The churches asserted that the primary roles for women were as mother and wife, but they also preached that a woman's purpose could be outside the home. In this they helped the women with this very duality; they legitimated their desires to have both careers and families. To the single women it was a strong thread of hope – exhorting them to remain faithful because God's purpose for women was to be wives and mothers. Paradoxically this offered women the legitimation they craved to be career women and said that God would bless them with a husband so long as they were faithful. Second the church offered formal and informal social networks in which to meet other single women and men. Third, both churches had various mentoring groups and counsellors that helped women work through their emotional strain. The churches encouraged counselling and as Carmen explained in her sessions with one of the church counsellors she realised that 'the high blood pressure [she was suffering from] was due to my stress. . . when you are in a very vulnerable place then God really steps in and helps you' (Carmen, 30, S, physiotherapist, proprietor, H.P.). Stress, vulnerability and disappointment began to be seen as opportunities for these women, who seemed not to need God, to draw closer to him. As McGuire (2002: 31) suggests, making sense of the past and motivating future actions are key ways in which religion helps people to make sense of their experiences.

Both at His People and Grace Bible church over half the women I interviewed wanted to start their own businesses and work from home. On the one hand this idea was fuelled by the government's strong entrepreneurial agenda promoting small business and job creation but was also galvanized by the feeling that it was an ideal solution for women to be both at home with their children and to maintain their own careers. But as one of the white women I interviewed from His People said,

I don't think the feminist battle has been completely won. I think, the great question of career versus family has by and large not been answered. . . I think that the working from home philosophy desperately underestimates the extent to which a lot of work is done not only in the actual doing of work but in the multiple interactions that surround you when you enter and leave the building and the infinite variety of interactions that you have in the building (Janet, 33, S, journalist, H.P.).

An in-depth study on the impact of religion in emotional coping methods found that churches offered both negative and positive patterns of coping but that members generally tended to engage with the positive religious coping patterns, which proved beneficial to them emotionally and physically (Pargament, Smith et al. 1998). In the next chapter I will go into more detail looking at emotional stress and work from the perspective of the family. The emotional stress that women engaged with at work was not only limited to these issues but was also related to the very real forms of discrimination they encountered in the work place.

Discrimination – racism, gender, age and the work place

Racism

One of the powerful forms of discrimination that the women in my study encountered was racism. In her study of women in management Mathur-Helm (2004) found racial discrimination to be a more significant factor than gender discrimination amongst black women in South Africa. Under the ideology of apartheid all South Africans were told that race was an essential truth based on the phenotypical variations amongst people, which could be classified and evaluated. White was regarded as the highest and black the lowest group with Asian, Indian and Coloured ranked in between. Bayly (2004), Cox (2000), Myrdal (2000), Gilroy (1996) and Hannaford (1996) amongst others have shown how, since the first voyages of discovery, European and North American white men have seen white men as morally, physically, intellectually and spiritually superior and more civilized than Indians, Asians, blacks and women. My interviews pointed to cracks breaking open in the white male hegemony of superiority in parts of South Africa corporate society. A central element in the life journeys of the women in my study was a burgeoning sense of self in which they no longer regarded themselves as 'inferior'.

The workplace was the space where racial differences had been most dramatically altered. In the home the majority of marriages were still endogamous and almost all domestic staff were non-white. My study included black, white and coloured women whose experiences of racism highlight changing social patterns. Janet, a journalist, expressed the experience of some white women in the study who felt that their citizenship in South Africa was questioned and who responded to this

sense of unease with outbursts of racial anger. Unlike many white South Africans Janet had been studying isiZulu at evening classes and worked in a company where the majority of staff were black. She said

so now I know when I am being talked about in a black language, right in front of me. And it is really awful and I know that all the black people don't think this is an acceptable thing, but it happens. If you are white, in moments like this you will have to call on your philosophical process that you have been through to know whether you want to stay here. Because your right to exist in this land will be so questioned. I would like to see the cage of "we have always been here" rattled just a little bit. Because it's rubbish! "We" have not always been here, up until the 18th century all the groups were moving (Janet, 33, S, journalist, H.P.).

Janet's experience at work pointed to a new racist language of black superiority (this is an area that needs more research but see Dolby 2001; Myburgh 2004). Stuart Hall reminds us that with the global decline of and 'instability of nation-state, self-sufficient national economies and consequently national-identities as points of reference, there has simultaneously been a fragmentation and erosion of collective social identity' in terms of race, class, nation and or gender (2000: 146). This break down was evident in South Africa in multiple ways, although the post-apartheid government has been trying to build a new democratic nation. Janet's comments spoke of the unease felt by some white South Africans, many of whom were once fearlessly nationalistic. Their 'right' to live in South Africa and how they live in the new South Africa have been questioned by the process of the apartheid dismantling negotiations, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the formation of the new South African constitution, and by their own guilt (Wilson 2001; Gibson 2002). Many white South Africans have left to start new lives in

Australia, Britain and North America. At His People the church continually preached, in multiple symbolic ways, that race did not essentially exist - only different backgrounds and cultures did. The 'philosophical process' that Janet referred to was one she went through in group discussions at His People where white guilt was subtly worked through by suggesting that if white people shared their resources and helped South Africa move forward then they could continue to live in the country and reap its rewards. The church helped white South Africans learn how to negotiate the changing racial dynamics in the workplace by teaching them how to use their skills and resources to help their new colleagues and so develop good working relationships. At the same time His People also tried to foster mentorship relationships between young previously disadvantaged people and older white members or colleagues.

Ntabeseng, a legal advisor at a large mining house, said that she had received a lot of support and mentoring from her boss, a middle aged white man. She felt that she could go to him for help and through his example the other staff members had come to respect her (Ntabeseng, 29, S, legal advisor, H.P.). Julia who worked for a former state owned energy company said that in her company no one noticed her race or gender. She felt encouraged because she was moving quickly up the corporate ladder. 'I don't have to be white to get recognition. If I don't pronounce a word in a certain way or my grammar is incorrect this will not hold me back' (Julia, 34, S, project manager, H.P.). Five other women had similar stories of white bosses who were particularly encouraging and they all felt very positive about the racial changes that were taking place in their companies. But four women told me stories indicating that they felt that they had been passed over

for a promotion because they were black. Vuyo, felt that at work black and white people worked together without too much tension but they would never become one group until they started to socialise together. In her department people did not socialise together because the two groups liked different food, music and forms of socialisation (Vuyo, 29, S, area manager in municipality). In her study of young black British men Alexander noticed a similar pattern. The men who had skilled jobs did not integrate their white work colleagues with their black social friends (1996: 87).

Affirmative Action (AA) and the government's Black Education and Empowerment (BEE) incentives were topics the women felt passionately about. About half the women said they needed to prove to their colleagues that they had been hired on their own merit or that while they were hired to make up the black numbers in the company they were actually capable of doing the job. Three women from His People worked in BEE corporate consultancies. These were consultancies that were able to get significant extra funding from the government on the basis that they employed qualified young black staff and helped to develop them on the job. All three women had negative experiences and felt that they had been used as pawns in the companies without being given any skills development training. At the heart of these negative experiences lay the way in which the 'Other', the black woman was perceived.

In their essays Gilman (1986) and Morgan (1997) showed how the objectification of black women's bodies in art and literature was bound-up in the development of a racial ideology that placed black women as the most inferior of all humans. The

women in my study were trying to break out of this centuries old condemnation. Tembi explained that the reasons why women were not taken seriously at work were

I mean a lot of white males they grew up with black women as their maids. And basically when they think of a black woman they think of their maids. And they don't really think of a black woman as their boss or maybe as a whatever, you know what I'm saying. And then sometimes with clients, you sit with clients and there are all these white males and they will only address the white males in the room and totally disregard you and you think, hey. And sometimes you know you have to be bold and speak out to answer some of their questions. And then they are taken aback (Tembi, 26, S, client liaison officer, H.P.)

Against this backdrop these women were trying to shape their careers and understand themselves, because identities are shaped in relation to the 'Other'; the other gender, generation, history or place (Hall 2000: 147).

This social interaction was a space of deep ambivalence. On the one hand these women held professional positions of equality yet on the other they carried with them and received from the men around them messages of profound historical inequality. While ambivalence and splitting may be part of the process of identity formation (Hall 2000: 146), the women who spoke of these racial experiences said that they were able to deal with these deep tensions because they were Christians. It was their faith and the teaching of their churches telling them that they were women who were equal to men in the secular world, that they had potential and a God given vocation in the business world as well as the home, and that all people were the same in the sight of God, which helped them to survive through these potentially crushing scenarios. The teaching of the churches was also

strengthened and verified by the social climate in South Africa at the beginning of the twenty-first century. These women were young, well educated and as Lerato said 'There are a lot of opportunities for young black women now and you really have to grab them' (Lerato, 32, S, cost accountant, G.B.).

Gender

In 'grabbing' these opportunities the women were not only encountering racial discrimination but also gender discrimination. The majority of leading writers on the social experiences of black women argue that gender and race cannot be divided, (hooks 1981; Collins 1989a; Frankenberg 1993; Carby 1998; Brah 2000; Carby 2000; Collins 2000; Frankenberg 2000; hooks 2000). Their particular concern has been to expose the ways in which race, gender, class and sex are interrelated, impacting and shaping women's lives. As I showed at the end of the last section, gender and race were deeply interrelated but in the experience of some women in my study being a woman was why they experienced discrimination. Often these women would be in teams where the other previously disadvantaged people were men and they were the only females. Women found that gender demographics in a company affected the tone of the company. Jennifer who worked in a predominantly male team said that

in my team I am the only woman and there are only 3 women in the organisation who have my position or are above me. So your interaction changes because your methods and thoughts are dominated by the male environment, guys are more aggressive in terms that they are more competitive (Jennifer, 28, S, financial analyst, H.P.).

Norma found that working with other women and having a woman as a boss was more difficult than dealing with men and male clients. She said that in her company the women were particularly competitive and unhelpful whereas the men were always prepared to help her if she had a query (Norma, 32, S, corporate consultant, H.P.). This was countered by Leti who found that:

Our clients are black men and the problem is that the male ego needs to be brushed and you don't want to brush ego's all day but have to, to get the job done. I hadn't dealt with so many African men before. They see you and they think oh, ego brushing, that is all they want, then you get the work (Letty, 26, M, events company project manager, G.B.).

In firms where there were few women in senior positions, sex roles have been more stereotypical and problematic for female employees (Ely 1995). Studies have shown that there continues to be a gendered wage gap between male and female earnings and racial prejudices towards minority ethnic groups (Xu and Leffler 1992; Hughes and Dodge 1997).

In my study four women felt that on the grounds of their gender they had been passed over for a promotion. They felt that women were generally looked down on. 'You sometimes feel you are not given opportunities because you are a woman, it used to be race but now it's gender' (Mamati, 35, S, H.R. manager, G.B.). Two women in executive management positions, who had partners and children, felt that the demands of their jobs discriminated against them. They had to work long hours, and leaving work before 7 o' clock at night to look after their families limited their career prospects. Their husbands were not willing to take on the traditional female roles in the family and they felt they were disadvantaged

because 'we don't have wives at home' (Nati, 33, S, senior logistics manager, G.B. lived with her partner and their 2 children). All these women did have domestic assistance but unlike other parts of Africa their domestic helpers were not regarded as second wives or the 'wives' of the working women (Amadiume 1987). I asked women who had experienced this gender discrimination what changes they thought should be brought about in the work place and how they related to feminism.

The women thought that feminism was a white women's battle because white women did not have to work and so could be 'fussy' about their working conditions. They saw their careers as an improvement on the work their mothers had done but essentially still part of their deprivation as previously disadvantaged women. In contrast to the black feminist/womanist authors cited earlier, the ideal for the vast majority of black women in my study was not more equality in the work place, but husbands who worked hard, earned well and therefore provided enough for them to stay at home and take care of their children with a view to returning to work when their children were older. This ideal echoed the teaching of the two churches, which maintained that women could do any work but that their most important role was that of being good wives and mothers. Half the women I interviewed said that their ambition in life was to start their own business so that they could work from home - maintaining some financial independence yet be there for their families. These opinions were not representative of all black South African women, but of young women in my study between 20 and 35. In the workplace these women found that their age was the third area where some of them experienced difficulties.

Age

The large majority of women from both churches found that being young and being promoted into management positions was both stimulating and demanding. They continually felt that their authority was being questioned and that they had to perform better than everyone else to prove that they were capable of the jobs they were given.

God is a leader and he had placed me in this position of leadership now. He wouldn't have chosen me if he didn't think I could. Now I find myself crying and asking him to truly help me. It's really hard having to lead people who are older than myself. At the same time I don't want them to feel that I am throwing my weight around, but as a leader I need things to get done (Cindy, 24, S, events consultant, proprietor, G.B.).

In a very different context Caro who worked for a large Parastatal said

I think it's because I am a woman and because I am young. The atmosphere at my work is that most people are not educated and so they are threatened by you if you are studying (Caro, 26, S, business analyst, G.B.).

About a third of the women found that their age counted against them at work. It was the teaching of their churches and the examples of the young pastors in business and church leadership that spurred them to move beyond the traditional constructs of African culture, which does not allow young people to take on leadership positions where they stand in authority over their elders.

In this chapter I have shown how women struggled with emotional conflict and discrimination in the workplace. I have made passing comments on the ways in which they felt that they had been able to cope with these difficulties because of the teaching and support of their churches. In the remaining sections of this

chapter I will go into more detail exploring just how church affiliation impacted their working lives.

Mentoring through the churches

Carmen who had grown up in the townships during the 1970's and 1980's but now lived in one of the previously white suburbs and went to His People said that

in Africa there is so much poverty, poverty of knowledge, economics, arts, so black churches will have the imbalance of pushing harder. All non white churches are about bettering yourself. Getting out of debt, bettering your job, bettering your education, educating your children, getting a house. They are the basic things. In a lot of white churches it's about bettering your inner life. That is a luxury. Expressing yourself in poetry looking at your emotional self are all luxuries. . . . I find that most white people just don't understand why we work so hard, why we push so hard. It's very expensive to live as a white person (Carmen, 30, S, physiotherapist, own practice, H.P.).

His People had an active business network, and in 2002 a new businesswomen's group was set up within the network. The black women and most of the white women at His People, whom I interviewed, said that the mentoring programmes were one of the most important things for them about their church. Most of them appreciated the interracial mix of the mentoring groups but a few did voice hesitation saying that at times the white women did not really understand what they, the black women, were dealing with. Within these groups they looked at the whole life of the individual and tried to help each other keep a balance between work, family, church, health, friends and recreation. In most of the groups they used secular mentoring and life-style training books. One of the members of His

People had recently set up a mentoring programme for students where members of the church who were working in the field that the student was studying gave young people help and guidance. The church also had a dinner club where couples hosted dinners in their homes. This was a way to meet new people, but many of the young black women said that for them this had been a way to learn about Western style food and entertaining which had made them more confident to host things at work.

At Grace Bible church there was no business network or large mentoring system but various smaller projects. One aimed to link older women with teenagers and women in their early twenties, and to give them some advice generally by guiding them as parents would. A second group was set up by Tumi (Tumi, 30, S, social worker, G.B.) with her friends as a mentoring group for women. They called themselves 'Women of Valour' and were all women in their late twenties and early thirties who worked in professional careers. They felt they needed to help each other keep a balance between work and family and find a way to express their faith in all they were doing. A third of the twenty something women I interviewed at Grace Bible church belonged to 'Focus', a mentoring/ discussion group not affiliated to Grace. Cindy who went to the group explained that it

is a group where a whole lot of young people get together and discuss success the Godly way. One of the topics that we tackled was confidence versus arrogance and the line between them (Cindy, 24, S, events co-ordinator, proprietor, G.B.).

These different groups linked members into commercial and social networks making the churches nodes in what Castells has identified as the modern network society (Castells 1994; Castells 1996; Castells 1997). Berryman argues that in

Latin America Pentecostal-Evangelical churches have been so popular precisely because 'they exhibit networklike practices' (1999: 21).⁵⁴

At Grace 90% of the women I interviewed had attended the yearly leadership training weekend. This was run by prominent business people and taught leadership skills. The women found this weekend very helpful as well as the four yearly women's seminars. These focused on helping women to realise their potential and taught them how to balance work life and family life in a Godly way. At the seminars I attended the speakers were successful business women or women in leadership positions in government offices. These seminars were very inspiring and there was a great spirit of camaraderie amongst the women. They focused on women in leadership helping women to find a way to be authoritative and lead a team of people without losing their femininity or becoming like men. What stood out the most in the preaching, mentoring groups and seminars was the emphasis placed on inspiring people to re-shape their self-images and to begin to see themselves as capable, competent people who had a 'purpose' and 'potential' and were able to do the work God had called them to with excellence.

Developing self-confidence and excellence

In the 1920s and 1930s W.E.B. du Bois (Reed Jr 1997; Du Bois 2000) tried to dispel the sense of inferiority that African-American women and men were living with and encouraged them to better their material positions through education and hard work. In the 1960s Martin Luther King Jr, rallied African-Americans to believe in their equality and in the 1970s the poet Steve Biko spearheaded the

⁵⁴ Also see Gerlach & Hine (1970) who in the late 1960s established that Pentecostal churches exhibited network-like characteristics.

Black Consciousness movement in South Africa (Hopkins 1991; Mzamane 1991; Pityana, Ramphela et al. 1991; Gilroy 1996). These men were prophetic voices fighting years of racial stereotyping. The women at His People and Grace Bible church who were born in the 1970s carried with them more starkly than their younger sisters the burden of this racist ideology condemning black people to positions of inferiority. For all the women I met their churches had played a major role in helping them to see themselves as capable, gifted women who could take pride in their heritage but did not need to be shackled to the past.

Then at Grace they would be dealing with your self-esteem and your work and how you do things. Then at one stage I was feeling really guilty that I had this great job. Then you go to Grace and you feel that this is where God wants you to be and it's not by accident that you are here. This is amazing and it has really affected me (Khanyi, 28, S, director of social work at a large state hospital, G.B.).

The women who had gone to model C or private schools all believed that white people had more confidence because they were taught it at school and they valued their schooling for having equipped them with a greater sense of self-confidence than they would have had from a township school. Grace, an assistant pastor at His People, thought that a lack of self-confidence was one of the biggest problems that faced black people (Grace, 26, S, assistant pastor, H.P.). Norma explained that it was all related to apartheid

(y)ou have been degraded so much through apartheid as an individual, you have been told that you are not intelligent. Then you're told that you are dirty. You are always on the receiving end of negativity. It breaks you down. It's almost as if there is a lack of emotional intelligence, but this is not a good word. You have no faith that you can actually do something. That lack of aggression towards life,

lack of faith, life can get me down. Not feeling of I can achieve. People are living with this lie (Norma, 32, S, corporate consultant, H.P.).

Rachel said that

traditional liberation thinkers talking about the difference between what they term negritude and what they call the African personality. They say you need both branches because negritude is saying to all black people wherever you are in the world, damn it you are worth something. It's this need to do what they term the emancipation of the black soul. Where you stop defining yourself against what you think is better than you - which is white people and you stop defining yourself as automatically inferior. And so they talk about the need to celebrate the sense of being African (Rachel, 32, S, legal consultant, proprietor, H.P.).

Both the women at His People and Grace Bible church believed that it was hearing and receiving the gospel that helped them to overcome their own sense of inferiority and lack of confidence. Maxwell (1998: 357) noted that a key element of Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in Zimbabwe was the 'strong emphasis on black pride and self-actualisation.' Many of the women told me that when they realised that they were made in God's image and that they were not inferior to white people or anyone else they experienced this as a major turning point in their lives, and their self-perception began to change. Going to church week after week being reminded that they were not inferior, helped them to grow in confidence.

Grace said that people who are not Christians

are not valuing themselves and they think that they need the status symbols to be someone. They need to learn about God and that their identity is in Him not immaterial things. We need to be teaching them about values (Grace, S, 26, assistant pastor, H.P.).

While the churches clearly played a role in helping these women develop their own self confidence, Alexander (1996:84) noted a ‘belief in individual success can be seen to reflect a new self-confidence amongst some black youth in Britain, who define themselves away from the view of traditional black employment and as part of a newly emergent black middle class.’ The women in my study were clearly doing a similar thing. As they achieved at work they gained self-confidence and began to become part of a new black middle class and moved away from traditional employment and township networks. Their church involvement was part of this process.

In tandem with developing a sense of self-confidence these churches also focus on instilling a sense of excellence in people. They preach that all individuals were equally important and that all one did should be done with excellence because it is the work God had called them to do – it was their ‘purpose’. About half the women I met said that the teaching around excellence had really prompted them to try and work harder and try to achieve, where before they had just seen themselves as failures and so had not put much effort into doing anything with excellence. Tumi had been touched by Pastor Sono’s teaching on excellence and said ‘he is saying how to treat our mother and the people you work with, be a walking bible and you do not have to preach but show God through excellence’ (Tumi, 31, M, H.R. manager, G.B.). Coupled with this main emphasis on realising individual potential and working with excellence at your God given purpose, both churches spent between a quarter and a third of their ministry time focusing on how Christians should handle their jobs.

The churches' teaching on business

Both churches had very similar teachings on Christianity and business, with four elements that stood out as central themes. The first was about prosperity. At both churches there was a divided opinion about prosperity and what financial blessings meant in the Christian life. About 30% of the women believed that God would help them through life but that not everyone would achieve financial blessings in this life. The purpose of the Christian life for them was to draw closer to God, to develop Godly characters, and suffering was understood as a way to develop this character (this was largely based on passages like Romans 5: 1-8).

A few women went further to criticise His People for not truly embracing poverty and suffering but rather seeing these as things to be battled through because at the end there would be financial blessings. They had a theology closer to Christian mysticism where suffering and poverty were seen as graces that helped to draw the believer closer to God - not things to be endured in the hope of an ultimate reward (Writes that influenced this view point were for example Merton 1948; Augustine 1991; Nouwen 1994; Merton 1996). Carmen said that the

whole process of life is to get to a place where we have everything in Him. This is not financial security, it's wholeness in Him, forgiveness, sanctification, that all our needs are met in Him. It also means that He is a God of blessings and as He clothes the lilies of the field He will provide for our physical needs (Carmen, 30, S, physiotherapist, proprietor, H.P.).

She only came to this after her practice had gone through serious financial difficulties and she had been very angry with God for not blessing her with prosperity. Having come through her crisis she was angry with His People for its

teaching that was so focused on success, excellence and achievement. She felt that the church damaged a lot of people by giving an unconscious message that not succeeding meant not being a good enough Christian, and during my fieldwork she left His People for these reasons. The women who were critical of His People were also sceptical of the prosperity message, which they felt their churches preached. They said it was presented as a means to an end and that this was not what the Christian life was about. Christianity was not a way to get wealthy.

At His People Rachel believed a teaching that divorced vocation and purpose had emerged. This meant people understood their vocation as making money and their purpose as evangelising non-Christians. It was lived out in such a way that people first made money and then, when they had enough money, went and did evangelistic work. She believed that this was wrong and that purpose and vocation should go together, in the more classically Weberian sense of vocation (Weber 1965).

The majority of women at both churches believed that prosperity was a gift from God, which they would enjoy in this world particularly if they lived pure lives.

I think that you have to build wealth and manage your wealth in an appropriate manner. God wants you to be prosperous but only when you are living a pure life (Jennifer, 28, S, financial analyst, H.P.).

Yet she like many others did not think that God blessed all Christians with wealth: some were given joy and peace or health. These rewards differed as different people had different talents. Most women understood suffering as something that

Christians had to go through to develop their character because only with strong characters rooted in God would they be able to steward their blessings well.

Other women like Nati (33, S, senior logistics and marketing manager, G.B.) believed that in order to be prosperous she and her partner needed to pray and claim the millions that God had in store for them in heaven. This theology was echoed by the women in the Focus group, who talked of themselves as the 'billionaires club' with their billions in heaven which they just had to claim through hard work and prayer. Some women said that they were successful in business because they believed that God would bless them and this gave them a confidence, which got them ahead. In general professional women believed that their wealth was given to them or would be given to them if they worked hard, lived pure lives and believed in God's grace.

The poor and less educated women that I met, in contrast, believed that they would be blessed with prosperity not through hard work but by praying for it.

Susan, a receptionist, summed up this idea

as a Christian you don't have to work hard like before but God will still give you all that you need because as a Christian we are given things by God. They just come if you pray and believe that God will grant you your desires and needs (Susan, 22, S, receptionist, G.B.).

The belief of these poorer women resonates with the Faith Gospel message explored by Gifford in Ghana (1998; 2004b) as well as with Maxwell's research in Zimbabwe (1998) and Ojo's study in Nigeria (1997a).

The second main teaching was about stewardship – managing your resources and time. At His People and Grace Bible church the leaders were well educated and the dominant message from the sermons was that through hard work and prayer God would bless those who were faithful in doing their work to the best of their ability. Iannaccone (1990: 309) showed that people with more money and more pressure on their time favoured ‘money-intensive religious practices’ that place a high degree of value on giving of one’s money rather than time. At His People women were expected to attend church, a home cell and some sort of ministry group at least once a week, while at Grace Bible church the professional women felt that there was less pressure for them to give of their limited time and rather their money. Some women at His People found the demands of time and money challenging and at times too demanding. At Grace the women felt proud that they could contribute financially to their church and appreciated that they were not ostracized for the limit time they gave to church events.

For those who did not have work, prayer and doing volunteer work was advocated. The central message was to break out of the township apathy that seemed to have locked so many young people into a sense of hopelessness because of the high unemployment rates and HIV/Aids pandemic in South Africa. Coupled with this was a perception amongst the black women that white people handled their money better than black people because they were taught how to budget from a young age. At Grace Bible church they started several schemes to encourage the youth to do things like car washes or hold cake sales to earn a bit of money. In these programmes they taught them how to budget, tithe and develop a sense of pride in their own ability.

Third, people were exhorted to do all things with integrity and not capitulate into bribery. The women felt that if they remained pure and did not succumb to corruption they would be blessed and raised up into leadership positions either through promotions or by starting their own businesses. Being in leadership was prized as it was regarded as the most effective way to implement Christian policies in the work place and government. Four women told me that they had left companies because they did not agree with the ethical behaviour of the staff or management. The women aimed to show Christ through their life-style, and for many, work was a key place to evangelise. They felt very strongly that it was wrong to take bribes and claimed to have resisted this, although they knew that it was common practice. Ten of the women were involved in prayer groups at their work places. For many women their Christian standards and morals were used as a shield against the sexist advances of men. Only a handful of women felt that by being a Christian, not taking bribes or sleeping their way to the top, they were limiting their career chances. The women who were involved in service and caring jobs said that being Christians made them better at their jobs.

The fourth key concept was a balance between work and family. At His People Pastor Ian was adamant that the family needed to take priority over work. The women pastors at His People who had families were all part-time because

their priority is their family. Even the men, if there is a decision to make, then it will be for staying at home with your family and we are not wanting people to sacrifice family on the altar of ministry (Ian, 36, senior pastor, H.P.).

At Grace Bible Church Pastor Gege believed that both husbands and wives needed to make it a priority to spend time with their family and not just work and earn money. In the women's seminars, encouraging women not to put their

careers before families was a common theme, although most of the women that I interviewed had worked hard to get ahead, sacrificed their social lives and therefore their chances of meeting and marrying suitable men; showing up the ambivalence between the churches' ideal and the reality that the women lived out.

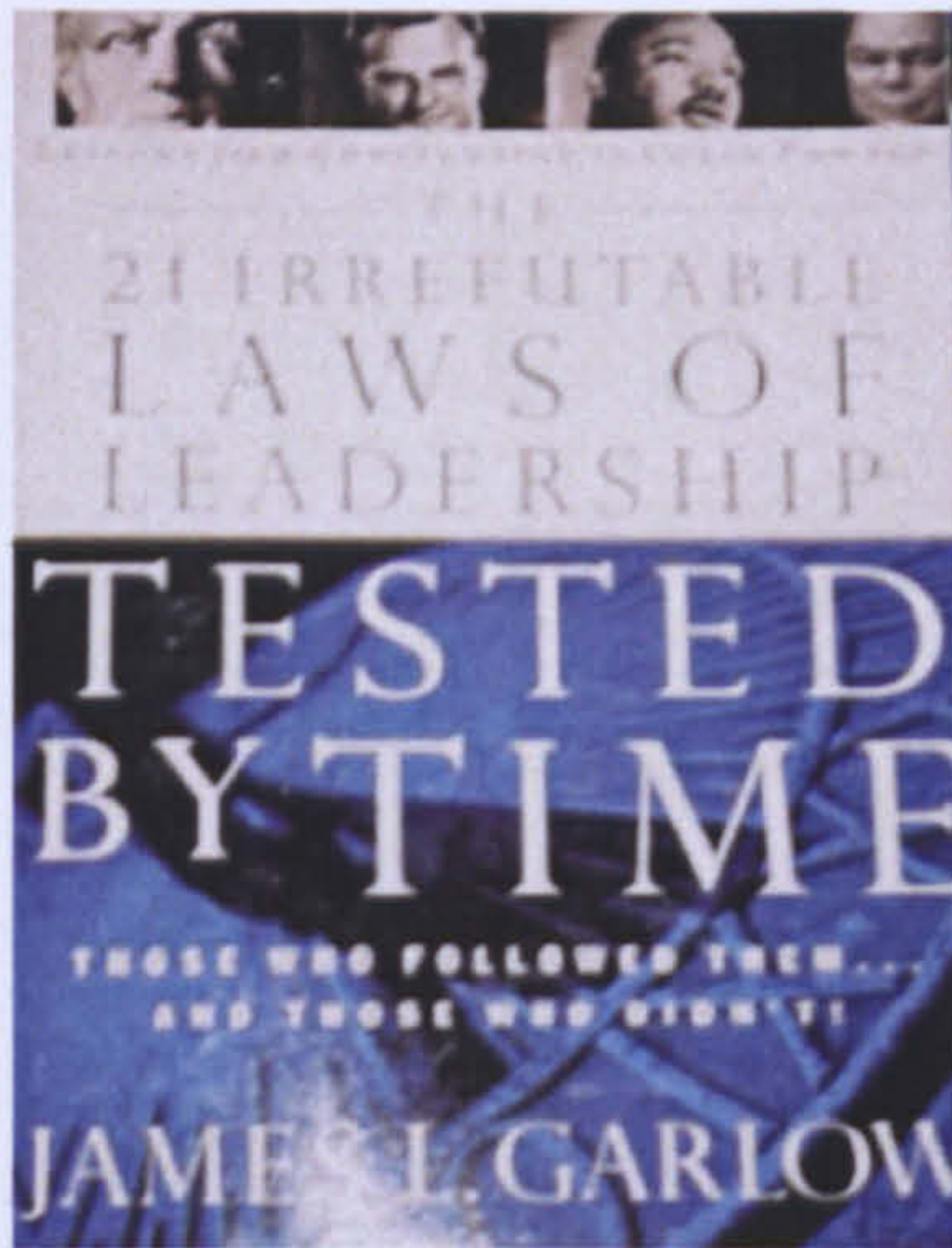


Figure 7.2 *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership Tested by Time* - one of the most popular books on leadership at both churches.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have shown that Grace Bible church and His People taught members how to handle difficult issues at work and focused on raising up leaders in the workplace. Both churches concentrated about a third of their ministry in soft-skills development – ‘equipping’ their members to excel in the work place.

For many of the young women I spoke to their rise to success grew from a desire not to become yet another single mother trying to get by in the townships. Lucy summed up the sentiments of most of the women at His People and the majority of women at Grace Bible church when she said:

When I started work they asked me what was my vision, and I said, growing up and seeing all these girls getting pregnant at school and all of them without any

sense of hope for tomorrow, I just didn't have a vision. I just wanted to get through, one step at a time. There was no great vision (Lucy, 30, M, investment banker, H.P.).

A significant part of their experiences at His People and Grace Bible church was to learn to develop a sense of purpose for their lives and that they had potential, because they had learnt that they could dream. Along the road to realising these hopes I have shown how they struggled with discrimination, the emotional strain of their work and a sense of who they were as career women and how they related to the communities around them. In different ways the two churches offered these women very similar support structures and teachings that helped them believe in themselves and spurred them on to achieve. But there was a continual tension between their careers and their families or desire to have families. Khanyi said

(t)he ultimate achievement for me is that I think I did very well in work being an assistant at 27 but there is something that is lacking and I feel that I have not achieved until I am married (Khanyi, 28, S, assistant social work director, G.B.).

In the next chapter I will look at the relationship between these women, their families and their churches.

Chapter 8

Singleness, Sexuality and the Dream of Marriage

Introduction

In the previous chapter I explored the relationship between religion and the world of work in the lives of the women I interviewed. I showed that these women were aided to some degree in negotiating their rising social and economic mobility by their involvement in their churches. While many of them had successful careers, professional advancement alone left them feeling empty and unfulfilled. The majority of women said that getting married and becoming a mother was the most important 'achievement' for a woman, and their ideal was a nuclear family. In this chapter I will investigate how the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian message influenced the way the women I studied interpreted their singleness, and the ideological and practical framework it gave them on their road to marriage.

In order to contribute to our understanding of women, religion, motherhood and family, and the changing social fabric of South Africa's emerging black middle class, I will focus on what has emerged for me as a central issue, namely the popularity of the nuclear family ideal supported by the two Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in my study. To many of the black South African men and women whom I met, the nuclear family was seen as a symbol of, and means to, success and prosperity. Behind this sentence lies a complex web of historical, ideological and symbolic identity markers. In the next two chapters I will unpack the implications of my statement and show why some young, professional African

women willingly engaged with the patriarchal nuclear family ideal preached at His People and Grace Bible Church.

This chapter deals with the process leading towards marriage and the single state many women I met were still in. The road to marriage was complicated for the women I met - fraught with cultural, economic and religious complexities. Five specific areas emerged as central in the lives of these women.

- 1) The cultural connotations of singleness within their churches, popular society and traditional African practices. In order to understand the significance of their experiences I will discuss the main reasons these women gave for being single.
- 2) Sexual fidelity was a marker of their faith. For women whose lives were dominated by ideas of rationality and reason in the secular world I propose to show something of the role that faith played in their lives, suggesting that these women balanced faith and reason in different aspects of their lives. Those areas that they could control, like their careers, were handled with reason; but those aspects like finding the 'perfect husband', which they could not control, were given over to faith – to God.
- 3) The ideal of marriage and sexual fidelity that both His People and Grace Bible church advocated was a powerful image around which women shaped their sense of self but it was also a potent marker of their relationship to the society around them. Through the boundaries they imposed on their bodies these women created an alternative self-

expression. This included following or disregarding the courtship rules of their churches and agreeing to *lobola* (bride price) or not.

- 4) Several women were the daughters of teenage single mothers, or had themselves been teenage mothers. Promiscuity and pregnancies out of marriage were a major issue for both churches. Teenage pregnancies, the high South African divorce rate and infidelity are areas in which far more research needs to be done. Here I will limit my discussion to the women I interviewed and an analysis of their experiences. Working with Kaplan's (1997) theory of *relational-poverty*, and drawing on Reay's (2004) concept of emotional capital I intend to explain some of the dynamics pertaining to teenage pregnancy that were most powerful for my respondents.
- 5) In line with the dominant North American conservative Christian teaching, both churches upheld a firm view of sexual abstinence before marriage and complete faithfulness within marriage. This teaching, more than any other, brought both churches into direct opposition with popular culture. It was women's sexual experiences and attitudes that separated them from society at large. For most of the women I met this was a fundamental expression of their Christian commitment. I will draw on Deborah Posel's (2005) argument that one of the unforeseen changes in the New South Africa was the sexual liberation that has become a feature of the post-apartheid society. As the women began to see themselves in terms of their

faith their relationship to not only to sex and their bodies, but also to Aids began to change.

This chapter begins with an overview of the literature on women and marriage in Pentecostalism and shows that little attention has been paid to single women. The chapter will then address the areas I outlined above.

Women, marriage and Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches

The studies of women in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches can be divided into two broad areas. The first deals with women in North America and Europe and the latter with women in Latin America and Latin American immigrants in North America. In their earliest form Pentecostal groups allowed and even encouraged women filled with the Holy Spirit to lead worship, preach and begin new churches (Sanders 1997; Chapman 2004). Under conventional Victorian piety women were regarded as having a natural aptitude for religion while men had very little. Fundamentalism 'doubted the sentimental faith of "womanhood" that all but exonerated half the human race from the original sin of Adam' (Bendroth 1993: 3). It sought to masculinise religion and attracted men claiming that they rather than women had a true capability for faith. The public religious space became the domain of men, and women were confined to the private, subordinate under their men in the home (Bendroth 1993). At the same time

(o)ne of the most prominent symbols of fundamentalist rhetoric was the divinised house. . . Also, by emphasizing the holiness of the home and domestic duties over the church and ministerial duties, fundamentalism encouraged even the most religious and reform-minded women to choose marriage and motherhood over church ministry and social mission (DeBerg 1990: 148).

Over the twentieth century this Fundamental teaching has deeply influenced the role of women as keepers of the home in conservative Christian circles.

In these churches the role of mother, as childcarer and homemaker under the headship of a providing and loving husband, was highly valued (see for example Dobson 1995 and his Focus on the Family teaching). These women were not anti-modern but anti-feminist, not in the work place but in the home. They resisted the expectation that women should find their fulfilment in paid employment. The conservative Christian ideology legitimated the desire that some women had to stay at home and take care of their families. It valued the role and work of women as wives and mothers at a time when some women felt that feminism devalued these roles (McGuire 1982: 197-9; Cucchiari 1990; Stacey 1990; Stacey and Gerard 1990; Blumhofer 1995; Gerami 1996; Griffith 1997; Brasher 1998). While this all seemed very positive, Ammerman has pointed out that for those women who did not conform to or fit into this family ideal, a conservative church could become a problematic place where the values and teachings failed to equip these members for the struggles of divorce and singleness (Ammerman 1987: 146).

The second debate has been largely located in Latin American Pentecostal-Evangelical studies and suggested that these churches promoted a feminisation of the machismo culture encouraging men to be more responsible husbands and fathers. Studies showed that while these churches expected women to be submissive to their husbands, women were attracted to this teaching because it reformed the behaviour of their men. Within the Catholic religious culture men

were allegedly not required to take responsibility for their salvation and the drinking, gambling and womanising male world continued to flourish. In contrast the Pentecostal-Evangelicals required men to reform their behaviour and as head of the home spend their money and time on taking care of their families (Flora 1975; Brusco 1986; Gill 1990; Brusco 1995; Martin 1998; Alvarez 1999).

This overview shows that in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches a good Christian woman was understood as being a wife and a mother who was the primary caregiver and responsible for the housework. All but two of the women I met worked either part-time or full-time in paid employment. But only some of them were married and fewer were mothers, although the average age of the women in my study was 31 years. The following section will review why so many women in my study were still single in their late twenties and early thirties, when their ideal was marriage. In doing so I will engage with the experiences of single women – a topic that is given little attention in the literature.

Reasons for singleness

The average age of the professional women in my study was 31 years. Over half the women were between 28 and 32 years. This meant that well over half the women in the study were of an age where they could reasonably expect to be married and yet 63% of the women were single (see table 1). In this section I will explore the relationship between the marital status of these women and their faith. Five main reasons emerged that in general terms explain why the women I interviewed were not married.

Several women came from backgrounds where their fathers had been largely absent from their lives. They felt that men could not be trusted and they did not want to experience the same heartache and disappointment that their mothers had been through.

The girls are also scared to get involved in relationships because they have come from homes where the men have left their mothers or have abused their mothers and they don't know how to be in marriage and how to find men that will treat them the way they should according to the bible (Miriam, 42, M, call centre manager, G.B.).

Women said that their experiences of having been 'abandoned' by their fathers made it difficult for them to trust God as a Father. Would God really provide for them as their churches taught? As they became successful and felt that their lives were 'coming together' they said it was easier to trust God. Not meeting an eligible partner was seen as 'testing' their faith in God. Other women said that becoming a Christian had changed the way they saw themselves because they no longer considered themselves orphans or abandoned by their fathers. Their 'heavenly Father' was their true father and he would take care of them. They were a part of 'his family' and so were not in a rush to start their own family because they had a 'family' – the family of the Church.

The second and most popular reason that women gave, was that they felt that men were intimidated by them. In an interview with a group of men from Grace Bible church, they confirmed this, saying that the independent career women were threatening. They also felt that women who had their own cars, houses and income were very demanding and expected their husbands to help around the house. Several, but not all, admitted that they felt uncomfortable being with a

woman who earned more than they did. These men were also mistrusting of women.

Women just want to be provided for and the reality is that they will not stick with you when things go hard. Yes when you are courting they are so understanding but they want the good things, and women are not prepared to suffer through a bad thing, they will just leave you (David, 34, D, engineering consultant proprietor, G.B.).

In these discussions it seemed to be the women's fault that they were not with partners. As Zanele, 28, single and a branch manager of one of South Africa's largest banks explained:

And now recently we have been going to university and exploring and realising that you can do this and you can do that in your own strength. Then you are working so hard and trying to avoid getting married to someone who will be abusive and not take care of you. So that at the first sign of trouble you ship out. So unfortunately that has also become a factor for men. They (men) are picking it up and they are staying away. They (men) are saying you know these ones they (career women) are so arrogant. They are so independent. I don't see her supporting me or agreeing with me, and my vision as a man. And so they decide ok, this is something to stay as far away from as I can.

A third reason why women were not married was because they consciously invested most of their energy into their work. 'God has a plan. I have not dated since 1999, when I had the idea of the company, and since then I have put all my energy into the company,' said Cindy a 24 year old single woman from Grace Bible church, who managed her own company. Other women like Ntabeseng explained that they had focused on their work in order to provide for their

extended families and in the process had not had the energy or time to actively look for a partner.

You have siblings who you want to help. You are just focussed on making as much money as you can, but once you get into the single thing it is difficult to get out of it (Ntabeseng, 29, S, legal advisor, H.P.).

While these women wanted to get married they also believed that by focusing on their work they were fulfilling a Godly purpose of their lives and would be rewarded by God with the partner best suited to them. Paradoxically the teachings of their churches helped these women not to become overly anxious about their single state and yet did not 'free' them from wanting to be married. It seemed that their faith offered these women a world-order in which they could both strive to be career women and legitimately dream of the perfect wedding and family.

A fourth reason why women were not married was because they were in 'relationships' with older married men. Young women who were students, unemployed or in low paid jobs received the most attention because they were financially dependent on the men they dated and so more willing to do what their 'partners' demanded. Many of these men were often married, and most young women in relationships like these did not expect to get married. Being in this sort of relationship gave them some immediate financial support but made it more difficult for them to find partners who would marry them.

The women at His People and Grace Bible church were scathing of young women who took lovers so that they could have fashionable clothes, mobile phones and go to parties, but the leaders of both churches were aware that a significant proportion of their congregation were either involved in such relationships or had

come out of relationships like these. Grace, an assistant pastor at His People, was critical of the church and felt that it should do more to address the needs of these women, providing them with more counselling and social support. For many young women it was not just the money that they found attractive in these older men, but 'so many girls who haven't had this (father's love) and they hear "I love you" and they don't understand it and they just believe it and live with the men' (Miriam, 42, M, call centre manager, G.B.). While most of the women I interviewed claimed to be single, in stable long term relationships or married, four women who were all not married told me that in their late teens and early twenties they had been in relationships with older married men. Bound up in their stories of becoming members of His People or Grace Bible church, were sad tales of the emotionally and sometimes physically abusive relationships they had been in with men.

Women also complained that there were just more women at church than men and that they did not want to marry men who were not Christians because then they would be going against their church's teaching. This echoes Iannaccone's findings that on average people seek partners whose religious capital matches their own (Iannaccone 1990: 313). This fifth reason was most difficult for the churches to deal with. In comparison to other mainline churches both Grace Bible church and His People had a membership demographic of about 60% female and 40% male, which meant that many people meet their spouses in the church setting. It was therefore possible for both churches to hold this up as an ideal, and women admitted that an initial reason for going to church had been to meet young Christian men, particularly because they hoped that these men would be less

promiscuous than the average young man in Soweto. At His People matters were further complicated by the transient nature of the student population who made up a third of the church.

Relationships are not really built within the church, largely because we all came from such different areas in SA. Then so many guys go home to find someone to marry where they come from. But a lot of the girls stayed in Johannesburg. But there are very few guys from my time who have stayed in Johannesburg and stayed at HP (Ntabeseng, 29, S, legal advisor, H.P.).

Some women believed that their church's teaching, both at His People and Grace Bible church, about marriage and motherhood as the ideal life was unhelpful and not necessarily biblical. The head female pastor at His People wants to see everyone enter into good healthy, strong marriages. But what then happens is that it is represented to the people as something that everyone should seek explained Pastor Rachel (33, S, pastor, H.P.). Pastor Rachel was critical of His People because, 'the world, and HP still have the underlying supposition that to be married is better than to be single and we become more acceptable when we are married than single' (Rachel, 33, S, pastor, H.P.). Grace Bible Church and His People ordained both unmarried and divorced women as pastors, but several of the successful single women in their late twenties and early thirties complained that they felt judged by their church communities for being single. They said they had the impression that it was somehow seen as their fault that they were single.

Faith or reason in dealing with singleness

While, to different degrees, the church community made many single women feel uncomfortable about their unmarried status these women did not only measure

themselves according the ideals of their churches. They all noted that their single status was not uncommon in the work place and they compared themselves to their work colleagues rather than members of the church community. 'At work there are quite a few people who are young (under 35) professionals and are not married, that's not uncommon' (Jennifer, 28, S, financial analyst, H.P.). The women separated themselves from the average or norm of their church by recognising that they were achieving in the world of work and so felt that the ideals of wife and motherhood did not apply as strictly to them.

Yet their faith was a powerful meaning system in their lives and they had to explain their singleness in religious terms as well.

It's something that is taking my faith to a new level because I always saw myself as being married by this age and having a family. And it's also aligned to the purity aspect. It forces you to realise that God does have your best interests at heart for me and that his laws are still applicable (Jennifer, 28, S, financial analyst, H.P.).

Lucy (30, M, investment banker, H.P.) said that she was angry with God when she was single but then she realised that she was not yet ready for a relationship and first needed to deal with her own emotional issues. While these women found their single status easier to accept when they compared themselves to their colleagues at work, Khanyi's statement, at the end of the last chapter, that marriage was their ultimate ideal was true for the vast majority of these women.

In those areas of their lives where women exercised a great deal of control and were able to effect change, for example in their work, they employed a high level of reason to explain their experiences. But in areas where they felt that they had

far less control for example, (finding a 'perfect husband') they engaged far more with their faith and spoke about this in religious language, 'waiting on God' to bring 'their pre-ordained perfect partner into their lives' (Mamati, 35, S, human resources manager, G.B.)⁵⁵. By engaging with their singleness in religious terms these women found it easier to cope with the anxiety they felt about being single and they had hope that 'miraculously' they would get married. Their church involvement and faith legitimated their dream of marriage although many were not actively dating.

The cultural implications of singleness

Not only was their independence and single status problematic in the church environment but it was also a difficult issue in their relationship with the broader society. 'Now I have bought my own house, and culturally this is wrong. You should only leave when you marry and so I have said that I will not sell the house. I will keep it and let it out' (Lerato, 32, S, cost accountant, G.B.). Amongst the women I interviewed only seven lived alone; the rest bought houses and then had cousins, parents or siblings living with them. Of these seven women only one went to Grace Bible church, the rest were members of His People. At His People it was far more acceptable for single women to live on their own. Amongst the six single women at His People who lived alone, three were white. At Grace Bible church the pastors that I spoke to felt strongly that young women should not live alone and that many of the problems that these young women faced, such as loneliness and being seen as intimidating to men, could be attributed to living on their own. In this respect Grace tried to maintain the African value of *ubuntu*

⁵⁵ For some of the married women I interviewed who had difficulty finding work this pattern was the reverse.

(humanness in community living). Both churches also upheld powerful notions of sexual purity that needed to be adhered to within a conservative moral code. This moral code was most explicitly expressed in the courtship regulations, which both churches advocated.

Courtship

Both Grace Bible church and His People had specific ideas and teaching about dating. They both preferred to call it 'courting' using the term that has become popular in American conservative Christian circles. The term denotes a more sexually conservative approach to dating, in which pre-marital sex is forbidden. The churches use the term to separate their 'courting' practices from 'dating' norms of society at large.

In the Grace Bible church's women's fellowship they tried to instil conservative Christian values amongst both the single and married women.

We must take care of ourselves and as young women they must treat their bodies as temples of God. As young women with God you can live a pure life. It is important to choose the right friends. They must have the same values and beliefs, otherwise you get swallowed up (Wonda, 42, M, accounts manager, G.B.).

The women I met said that they believed that pre-marital sex was wrong and unbiblical but that it was a struggle to stick to these rules. Some of them admitted to having sex before marriage and once they became committed Christians this was something they battled to give up. They said it was easier to uphold this rule if they were with Christian men. Not all the women who went to Grace Bible church held this principle and those who admitted that they were less committed

Christians than they would like to be, also said that they could not stick to the sexual rules of the church.

The emphasis at Grace Bible church was on teaching young people how to court. That meant explaining to them how young men and women should relate to each other. In the youth programmes the church was teaching them about sexually transmitted diseases and helping to create non-threatening spaces in which teenagers could speak to each other and discuss sexual issues. A central focus of the church was giving young men role models and advice on how to interact with women in an alternative way to the male township culture.

The boys are so lost, their fathers haven't sat down to tell them how to court. If you are rejected once you go again. We just expect men to know how to court and they don't know how to approach these women. So now my husband is going to get involved and help these young men (Miriam, 42, M, call centre manager, G.B.).

Leaders involved in youth work at Grace Bible church also said that they were trying to encourage parents to talk more openly about sex to their children. Within African culture parents did not speak to their children about sex and it was something the older generation found difficult to do. But with the Aids adverts in South Africa that had Nelson Mandela encouraging parents to speak to their children honestly about sex, sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy, this message at least had a great champion.

At His People the emphasis was quite different. They had a youth programme called SwitchVert aimed at Christian and non-Christian teenagers in which they

sometimes talked about dating, courtship and sex. Unlike Grace Bible church where issues of courtship were generally handled in the youth meetings and possibly at conferences, His People made a point of giving clear, regular teaching on courtship in the evening services that were largely aimed at younger people. People learnt what the church's expectations were in sermons, at His People Bible School, seminars on singleness and courtship and in the cell groups. The church also had several social groups and events to encourage young Christian men and women to meet. Within the social fabric of this church single women, even more than single men, were regarded as liminal. They did not fit into the institutions of marriage or family, mainly living alone with the potential to disturb these structures.

In order to control this potentially potent force the church had clearly defined courtship rituals and suggested that a young couple courting could hold hands but should not kiss until they were married. Four of the young students I spoke to found the rules 'very strict, but it could be good' (Sarah, 20, S, student, H.P.). The rest of the women whom I met from His People and who were not in leadership, were not completely committed to these rules.

I didn't like the whole HP prescriptive thing. I think most people do kiss and I do understand the guidelines and some people need the guidelines but I think it's a bit much and I think there does also need to be accountability. But how do you monitor a policy that you put in place. There are people who didn't kiss before they got married but I did kiss. But I think the prescription is not real. I think they need to think about that (Lucy, 30, M, investment banker, H.P.).

The church taught that as a couple you would each be told by God that a certain person was the spouse God had chosen for you. I heard several stories of women who had been told by God in church or at prayer meetings that a man in the congregation was 'their husband'. Having heard this it was then legitimate for them to pursue the man and get involved in his friendship circle. Some women waited for years before the man they 'knew would be their husband' had a similar revelation that they were to be his wife. The two young people would then meet with one of the pastors and explain that they both had a revelation from God that this was their partner. With the blessing of a pastor the two could begin to court. Several of the pastors had similar stories of how they knew that they were meant for each other and these romance stories were well known in the church.

The most famous was the story of the head pastor, Paul Daniels, who after a few years of ministry as a single man had a revelation from God that it was now time to get married. At the same time in another town his future wife saw a picture of him as part of an advertising campaign for an evangelism trip he had planned. She 'knew' that he was meant to be her husband. The two met, married, had children, built up the successful His People Christian Ministries and then in 2003 Paul Daniels admitted to having had an affair while married. When I was doing my interviews the story I heard from some women in leadership positions was that he had had several affairs and had a 'sexual problem', which was why he set such strict rules around the subject. Most members of the congregation whom I spoke to felt that the 'whole Paul Daniels debacle' had been badly handled by the Johannesburg and Cape Town⁵⁶ His People churches.

⁵⁶ Cape Town His People was the headquarters of the larger His People Christian Ministries and the church where Paul Daniels was head pastor.

The whole purpose of the courtship rules and rituals within both churches was to help young men and women find life partners without compromising their conservative message of sexual abstinence before marriage. In both communities single women had the potential to disrupt Christian families within the religious communities as these women could lure faithful Christian husbands and fathers away from their families. Within the South African context getting young Christian women from backgrounds connected to traditional African cultures married, was further complicated by expectations and debates about *lobola* or bride price.

Lobola, or bride-price

Lobola is a traditional African practice where a young man pays a bride-price to the family of the woman he wishes to marry. At the beginning of the twenty-first century it was seen as a symbolic representation of the man's ability to provide for his wife. Amongst the women I spoke to the current *lobola* expectations for an educated woman were around R50, 000.00 (£4, 545.00), although for a less educated woman it could be between R15, 000.00 (£ 1, 363.00) and R 20, 000.00 (£1, 818.00), the average yearly earning of a labourer. Grace Bible church worked with the cultural expectations of *lobola* and wove it into their Christian ideal of marriage. His People on the other hand were totally against the practice.

Pastor Gege, from Grace Bible church, believed that if young women let their boyfriends pay *lobola* for them then they would have more stable marriages in which the men were committed to making their marriages work.

Marriage has become materialistic and the sad thing is that they (the women) end up helping the guy to pay the *lobola* just so that they can be getting married. But then the man never values them and he has no sense of pride. Now they get married to someone who is dependent on them and the roles get vice versa and it doesn't work out. With time they feel they want to be women and they want to be looked after (Gege, 42, M, pastor, G.B.).

While Pastor Gege's position was clear, the reality for women whom I met was sometimes more complex. Nati was following Pastor Gege's advice of not paying for her own *lobola*, but her boyfriend did not earn very much and as she was a well qualified woman with an MBA from GIBS (Gordon Institute of Business Science) her *lobola* was very high. She was a senior logistics manager at a large multi-national energy company and had been living together with her partner for the previous 10 years. They had three children together but were not married because he had not yet been able to save enough to pay her *lobola*. She knew that in the eyes of God and Grace Bible church, she was sinning but it was more important for her that her boyfriend paid her mother the full *lobola* money, from his own money instead of sticking to a rule of sexual abstinence. Nati said she did understand that as Christians they should have waited until he had paid off the *lobola* and they had married before they started to live together, but by then they would both have been in their mid thirties.

Tumi also went to Grace Bible church, she also earned more than her husband and she also believed that he should pay *lobola* for her.

When we got married I had a townhouse and he only had a car. When I asked where are we going to stay I didn't want to move into the back room at his

mother's. Then when he was coming with the *lobola* proposals and I was moving into my townhouse and my mother said but what are they going to say you are just being so independent and then I think he was upset, because the man must provide. Then the place (her townhouse) is there but he said that we have to move to the house that we buy. I said that I didn't have a problem with that. There is no problem with me earning more because he sees himself as the main provider, he saved for the house and he pays for the bond and the rates and the food. So he feels that he is in control and he has this way with money. I buy my own things and I have just bought a big family car, which I drive. I also pay all the medical accounts (Tumi, 31, M, H.R. manager, G.B.).

These two examples show how important and entrenched *lobola* was as a cultural practice for some women in African society. Grace Bible church had not found a particularly effective way to help women fulfil both the Christian ideal of no sex before marriage and paying off *lobola*. Yet, their support of this African custom and attempts to integrate it into a modern version of Christianity, was a distinct part of the appeal of this church to the women I met. In contemporary African culture it was acceptable for a man and woman to live together while the man was paying off *lobola* for his future wife. Grace Bible church therefore had a grey area for couples in this position. They did not condone this co-habitation but they did not condemn it in the same category as general promiscuity. By upholding *lobola* the church was not maintaining an ancient static custom but was engaging with the contemporary *lobola* practices⁵⁷ where most young people began to live together while the man was paying off the agreed upon sum. Once the *lobola* was

⁵⁷ Ansell (2001) showed how *lobola* practices are being re-interpreted by teenagers within a problematic discourse of 'equal right' and 'culture'. For these young people this was a topical issue and they felt passionately that it should be maintained.

paid a large 'white wedding'⁵⁸ was held. This wedding was the Christian ceremony and marked not only the end of the *lobola* payments but that the couple were now married in the eyes of God.

His People did not agree with *lobola* and tried to dissuade members from paying *lobola* or having *lobola* paid for them.

And they can't afford to be paying *lobola* and then have a white wedding and still be trying to build up a house. So ok, they get stuck. They live together while they are paying *lobola* but they are living under condemnation because they are not living in a state that God has ordained. All to fulfil cultural expectations. So as a church we find this a real problem. So we have to ask the fundamental question what is marriage? (Themba, 28, S, pastor, H.P.)

For Pastor Themba and the other His People pastors the sin of living together far outweighed any cultural benefit that *lobola* might have had.

While women at Grace Bible church saw *lobola* as a sign of respect and that their future husband could take care of them, the women at His People saw it as a symbol of ownership.

What I have observed, is that men are providers. But they seem to lack the emotional relationship with women. In the sense that they seem to treat women in the sense, that I paid *lobola* for you. I am not interested in how you feel, how you raise the children, how you run the household. You must just do these things. My job is to go out and get the money. I come home late and tired and I don't want any worries when I come home (Norma, 32, S, corporate consultant, H.P.).

⁵⁸ This is normally a church ceremony to which the bride wears a Western style white wedding dress. It marks the final stage in the long wedding-marriage negotiations and is a fusion of Western and African wedding rituals.

The women at His People were unwilling to have *lobola* paid for them because they did not want their husbands to 'own' them. They also recognised the financial demands that it would make on their future husbands and that in order to avoid living in sin they would have to wait for several years before they could be married.

The attitude of the two churches towards *lobola* was one of the key differences between them. It signified Grace Bible church's attempts to try and integrate contemporary African practices, which did not include ancestor veneration, into their Christian theology and practice epitomising what these women called 'Romary Creams'. By contrast, His People tried to create a multiracial church community in which African practices such as *lobola* were rejected. This largely resulted in a Euro-centric Christianity flavour with select African images by way of songs during worship and African style decorations in church - an 'Oreo' approach to Christianity.

While His People and Grace Bible church were deeply divided in their understanding and acceptance of *lobola* they both admitted that sexual promiscuity was sinful and that pregnancies outside of wedlock were a sad consequence of this sin.

Promiscuity and pregnancies out of marriage

You know they just don't want you to come to church (both mainline churches and His People) pregnant because then you make the family and the church bad.

They will turn away from it. They know it's happening; they don't say anything

about it. But then if you have a baby then they are angry because now you make everyone look bad (Moya, 21, S, student, H.P.).

Rachel, one of the pastors at His People, was keen to assure me that they did not condemn anyone who became pregnant while not married. The church was pro-life and against abortions, but she told me how one of the male pastors had counselled a young woman who was pregnant and wanted an abortion. But Grace, one of the His People assistant pastors on a university campus said that the one area she wished the church paid more attention to was in offering Christian supporting, counselling and teaching to young women who got into negative relationships with older men for money.

And there are girls that are Christians and they are so worried about what we (His People church) will say. And most of the time they will abort the babies because they will be so worried what we will say and their families. Then they can hide it from us but at night they are still really worrying about it and they live in condemnation for the rest of their lives. They are not able to talk about it. They are living in condemnation (Grace, 26, S, assistant pastor, H.P.).

Both churches were aware of the problems of poverty and the sexual promiscuity of the modern youth culture. They understood that most of these young women got into relationships with older men, many of whom were married, as a way to get status symbols like clothes, mobile phones and be taken to clubs and bars. These young women looked as if they had money while in reality they had little or no cash of their own. On the university campuses the students looked well dressed but were not able to pay their student fees because they received things from 'their men' but rarely cash. The findings of research by Posel (2005) and

Nutall (2004) show how common and wide spread these practices are in the Gauteng area.

People need to change their attitudes. Only then will things change. You know in the townships often if children are hungry the mother will say go and sleep with this man then you will have money. The mother knows that the man is sleeping with other women too. And then the girls get Aids (Grace, 26, S, assistant pastor, H.P.).

Then people who are not working they will sleep with anyone who is working so that they will get some money. Women get pregnant so that they will get the R160.00 grant because you can live off this. And you get R 740.00 for a pension, so if you stay with your grandmother and have a baby then you have enough to survive (Onika, 38, D, police captain and G.B. chaplain to the police force, G.B.).

Several young women said that the women who had two or three children from different partners were 'just doing it for the money'. Pastor Gege (G.B.) said that in her counselling she found that some women slept with men for the money, others because they hoped to get pregnant and so get their lover to marry them and still others because they didn't know their fathers and were looking for a father replacement.

Cindy told me about her friend who lived next door to her and who had fallen pregnant in her final year at school.

I think it's just not having a sense of worthiness. Just not having hope and security and not having a sense of something of her own. She found comfort in a boy while I had my relationship with God (Cindy, 24, S, events consultant proprietor, G.B.).

Belinda whose story of an unwanted pregnancy that brought her to God, which I outlined in chapter 6, powerfully illuminated how deeply emotional factors influenced her decision not to terminate her pregnancy. She kept her baby because she realised that her child would be the first person in her life to love her unconditionally. These complex, interrelated factors go beyond the explanations given in the theses of culture-of-poverty (Moynihan 1965), economic determinism (Wilson 1987) and cultural strategies (Stack 1974) in accounting for teenage pregnancies amongst African-American or black women. As the women in my study pointed out, and Collins (1989b) and Kaplan (1997) have theoretically argued - these factors all play a role but so do emotions, and we need to include them in an explanation of teenage sexual engagement and pregnancies. Kaplan (1997) argued that at the root of teenage pregnancies amongst many African-American women lay what she called a poverty-of-relationship. She suggested that these young women chose to carry their children to term because they were looking for affection and love. These young women had not received the emotional care they needed from their fathers – who were largely absent, or their mothers – who were mostly too busy working and too tired to give emotional support. In Bourdieusian terms Reay (2004) and Silva (2005) would point out that emotion is also a form of capital, and these women were all suffering from a critically limited amount of emotional capital in their lives. They therefore looked for other sources of love and care, hoping to find them in sexual relationships with men and/ or by becoming mothers themselves and entering into autonomous relationships of care with their own children. This is a vast and important field of study – but one that I cannot engage with in this thesis. What I would like to

highlight is that Kaplan's argument resonates with the stories of the women I met, many of whom found in the church love, emotional support and the family they never had. For some young women their involvement at His People or Grace Bible church gave them the emotional support they needed and stopped them from looking for love by creating their own families. Six of the women in my study had been teenage mothers and joined the churches after they fell pregnant or had their children. These women experienced both churches as accepting of their children and said that they had received help and emotional support in dealing with the unforeseen difficulties of single parenthood. Teenage pregnancies and single parent households affected 73% of the women in my study. For these women Kaplan's thesis of relational-poverty resonated with their stories of abandonment and rejection, some of which I outlined at the beginning of the chapter.

Kaplan's study was based on two American communities and so does not engage with the African cultural implications of motherhood.

But now we (Grace Bible Church) have a challenge, from a isiZulu culture or something like that, you need to have a child before you get married to show that you can have children. So now it's getting tricky to say what are your real cultural things and values. And what are your values and where does the church stand. So we can't go against the values of the church. So often from the family there will be this pressure to at least get a child when you are over 25, even if you are not going to get married (Gege, 42, M, pastor, G.B.).

In the next chapter I will discuss motherhood in more detail, but will note here that in traditional African culture a woman often has to prove her childbearing by

having a child before she marries and is only considered adult once she has had a child. This was a pressure that five of the professional women in my study had experienced. For three of the women having a baby in their teenage years meant that in their late twenties and early thirties their families placed less pressure on them to marry because they had already had a child. The other two women were regarded with suspicion by their families because they did not have children. On the whole women said their families were proud that they had not become pregnant before marrying.

‘Let me tell you about my society. For you to get a boyfriend you need to have sex and to be pregnant, this is the only way to get married’ said Lerato (32, S, cost accountant, G.B.). She, like other women at His People and Grace Bible church explained to me that if girls wanted boyfriends they had to look beyond the church and that meant engaging with popular cultural norms around sexuality. Women’s sexual abstinence was not only up to them but also the pressure from the men they were in relationships with. At Grace Bible church the women also complained that Christian men were promiscuous, and four women told me of men they knew were having affairs. All these men were members of the church. Pastor Gege, like her husband Pastor Sono, were well aware of this and felt that one of the difficulties about being a large mega church and icon of African success was that the church attracted people who wanted to associate with the achievements of the church but found it difficult to live out the gospel.

As I spent time speaking to women, attending church services, going to home cell groups and participating in women’s day conference I came to realise that this

was a world in which women could expect to have a committed husband, but this depended mainly on attracting men and subtly placing the responsibility for a successful marriage and family life on the shoulders of the women. It was a masculinization of Christianity that tried to create as attractive an environment as possible for men, rather than for women. It was a world in which men were the leaders and single women needed to be contained to avoid tempting them. Unlike Latin American Pentecostalism, this was not a feminisation of the male or machismo culture of South Africa, but rather an attempt to reform the machismo street culture by attracting men into a church environment in which they were regarded as the rightful heirs. The marked difference between the cultures of the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches and the larger popular cultures was their relationship to sexuality. It was not centrally about getting men to take greater responsibility in the home or making Christianity attractive to them. It was about a message of sexual restraint for both men and women that would be rewarded with emotional and material success, symbolised by a stable nuclear family. Both churches were striving for a moral Christian message of abstinence and this was what defined them over and against society at large. In this final section I will explore the implications of this in more detail.

Sexual abstinence in the context of South African society

These conservative moral principles and clear practical teaching on how to relate to members of the opposite sex lose much of their significance if they are not understood within the broader context of South African society and particularly the township and Y culture which the women I interviewed interacted with. The sex-for-goods industry, which I mentioned early, where young women were in

quasi mistress type relationships with older men, has been one of the unforeseen phenomena to emerge since the end of apartheid. Sociologists had expected the politics of race, gender and inequality to be dominant features of the New South Africa, but the politics of sexuality was unpredicted. Deborah Posel pointed out that

(a)rguably, post-apartheid South Africa is in the throes of such an historical moment, in which sexuality is perhaps the most revealing marker of the complexities and vulnerabilities of the drive to produce a newly democratic, unified nation. . . . At a time when many other parts of the world were sites of increasingly (albeit unevenly) liberal, experimental sexual practice, the apartheid regime subjected sex and sexuality to particularly heavy censorship and repressive policing, which actively excluded the kinds of public sex talk which marked the growth of consumer capitalism, particularly in the west, in the latter half of the twentieth century (Posel 2005: 129).

The last decade has seen an explosion of experimental sexuality as people under 40, who fought for the end of apartheid and those who are the inheritors of the new freedom, began expressing their liberation through sexual abandonment. Sarah Nutall (2004), researching the vibrant mainly upwardly mobile black youth in Rosebank Johannesburg, suggested that the particular Y culture that they were creating was a hedonistic expression of political, economic and sexual liberation. In contrast the two churches I interacted with, offered a very different culture - one of sexual restriction and clearly defined markers. I have noted the reasons that the women themselves gave for choosing to be part of such conservative communities: not wanting to be hurt emotionally or physically by men, wanting to free themselves from the cultural demands of relationships in order to focus on

work, and wanting to gain their own financial independence. This tied in with the main hypothesis of this study that as members of these churches the women in this study found they were given the ideological frameworks and practical help to negotiate their personal strivings for success both financially and emotionally.

In the previous chapter I showed how the cultures of ambition, excellence and hard work encouraged in both churches, integrated easily with the world of work. But the churches' teachings about sexuality were in complete opposition to that of the popular culture. Mary Douglas (1966) highlighted the importance of the body as a porous entity that symbolically mirrors community. Stringent taboos around purity and dirt are used to create boundaries that protect and separate a community from society at large, other communities or serve to ensure that the members remain within the group and adhere to its rules. These are also powerful markers in the creation of identity (Van Dijk 1997; Hunt and Lightly 2001; Hunt 2002). In this description and analysis of some Pentecostal-Charismatic women in South Africa, I have shown the very public nature of the lives of these women. Most of their time was spent in the work place - a public space, and the home - which was also a 'dangerous' space where they interacted closely with other religious practices or a had a constant stream of neighbours coming and going to attend prayer meetings and cell groups. In this porous environment the body needed to be guarded, and remained the only marker of Christian purity⁵⁹. Salvation and true group membership were not denoted by participation in religious activities as anyone could attend a church service for a variety of reasons either religious or for

⁵⁹Bynum, C.W. (1987) illuminatingly discussed how Christian women in Medieval Europe expressed their spirituality by controlling the only zones they had power over – their bodies and the household food consumption.

social network and status. The true Christian woman did not refrain from going to particular places, but restricted what entered her body.

Analysis of the life stories that the women told me highlighted a clear contrast between the self perception of women who had made a deep level commitment to their faith and those who only seemed to belong to Grace Bible church or His People for the social benefits attained from this association. As women became more committed to their faith and started to live out what they were taught in sermons so most of them gradually began to change their sexual practices. The overwhelming impression was that these women valued themselves – their individual bodies, their community body and their family body⁶⁰. This affected how they engaged with HIV/Aids. As they valued themselves and their place in the community they were less willing to take sexual risks that might lead to disease. Where once they felt they had nothing to live for and were prepared to take any risk in order to secure approval from a boyfriend, they were now more discerning either not having sex at all or using a condom. Judith Butler (1999) suggested that gender was a ‘performative act’ – ‘the repeated stylisation of the body’. We are continually re-shaping how we present ourselves, and this influences our identity. For the women in my study, the way they represented their femininity and identified themselves as women was continually influenced by both popular culture and the teaching of their churches. As they aligned themselves more closely with the message of ‘sexual purity’ so they identified and presented themselves in more conservative styles. This conservative approach was bound up with their identification with Romary Creams, rather than the more

⁶⁰ See Turner (1984) for a more detailed discussion of the body and its relationship to society.

sexually 'liberated' or flirtatious Oreo.⁶¹ Bound up with this was a more rigid idea of what it meant to be a woman – to be female - than contemporary society at large⁶² may hold to.

In order to bring God's kingdom into the world the Christians I met felt called to enter fully into the world, to compete with others for success, and show the riches they had gained by consuming the symbols of prosperity. What marked them as different was the boundaries that they set around their bodies and specifically the sexual restrictions they set for themselves. These were tied into a specific theology of the family and motherhood in which one of the primary purposes that God had given to the vast majority of women was to become mothers and raise Christian children. To be an effective Christian mother, who raised God-fearing children and to be a faithful Christian wife who kept her husband these women needed to be pure and remain pure, because 'the pure will inherit blessings' (based on Luke 6:20-26). They believed that they would be blessed by God with spiritual and material rewards. In the next chapter I will explore in detail the meaning of motherhood and the interrelationship between religion and family in the context of my study.

Conclusion

In this chapter it has emerged that some of the women in my study were single for a number of reasons. Paradoxically both His People and Grace Bible church

⁶¹ See De Beauvoir (1978) and Butler (1986) for a detailed discussion of the body as 'situational'. 'As a locus of cultural interpretations, the body is a material reality that has already been located and defined within a social context. The body is also the situation of having to take up and interpret that set of received interpretations' Salih (2004: 28).

⁶² Coakley (2002: 153-161) argued that in post-modern society there is not a set grand-narrative of what the male or female body should be – but multiple expressions, and this impacts how the Christian body is seen.

offered them a sense of assurance that they would get married by preaching that this was God's plan for women. This legitimated their dreams and fuelled their hopes of marriage and stemmed their fears of never finding the 'right man'. At the same time it made women feel uncomfortable and incomplete with their single status. Women responded to this by drawing on another one of their churches' central teachings arguing that they were single because they were fulfilling their Godly purpose by focusing on their careers. As the judgements of their churches became uncomfortable, so these women compared themselves to their colleagues, many of whom were also single.

In both churches the older single women were made to feel that it was somehow their fault for being single. These churches encouraged their young Christian members to settle down and promoted a message of sexual abstinence outside of marriage. For both churches the single woman was a dangerous, liminal entity that threatened the stability of the community. The smaller His People congregation concentrated far more energy on helping members meet potential life partners, and strongly discouraged any form of co-habitation even for cultural reasons. Grace Bible church did far less to help young adults meet socially and had a far more culturally inclusive approach. They tried to weave the practices of *lobola* and large community weddings into their Christian practice. In so doing they were identifying themselves as a modern African church, which honoured commitments to the extended family and allowed members to be present at some African practices. In a township like Soweto and a metropolis like Johannesburg where pregnancies were seen as a way to get married, or a cultural marker of fertility, or just a way to be assured of a steady government grant, the Pentecostal-

Charismatic Christian message defied the norm. For those women who guarded their sexual purity, it was this that set them apart. These boundaries were the daily testimony to their Christian commitment, even if it meant years of singleness and loneliness. The reward they hoped for was a Christian husband, who would honour them and whom they could obey. In the next chapter I will explore the reality of lives based on this ideal.

Chapter 9

Marriage and the Making of the Nuclear Family

Introduction

In the previous chapter I showed that for many of the women whom I met at Grace Bible church and His People, getting married and having a family was an ideal, which they did not always find easy to realise. I proposed that both churches were engaged in trying to masculinise their Christian message and that the nuclear family was regarded as a symbol of success. Both churches contained and managed the potency of single women who were potentially dangerous to the church and family structures (Ammerman 1987).

Within the Pentecostal-Charismatic world the institutions of marriage, family, motherhood and religion were used to order the universe. I am not aware of any published studies of Pentecostal-Charismatic women, marriage and the family in South Africa, but this chapter will show that for some South African Pentecostal-Charismatic women their faith legitimated, taught and made accessible a life-style that was imbued with the powerful symbolic meaning of the nuclear family as a sign of success. These churches consciously strove to appeal to men and preached that the 'real man' took responsibility for his family by providing for and leading his wife and children. Both men and women found this message attractive. Within this model problematic links to traditional African cultural and religious practices could be broken, a contemporary African identity could be re-shaped and a family structure could be re-constructed in which both parties in the

conjugal relationship were committed to providing the family with economic and emotional stability.

Here I have three aims: to explain in more detail the idea that the two churches in my study were engaged in a process of masculinising the Christian message, to explore the significance and implication of the conservative nuclear family as a symbol of success, and to unpack the potency of motherhood as an identity marker in the churches and South African society. To do this I begin with an overview of the literature on motherhood, gender and the family with a particular focus on South Africa. Having set out the various debates I will look at six specific areas that emerged as key from my fieldwork: 1) the Pentecostal-Charismatic understanding of marriage, 2) wifely submission, 3) difficulties within marriage, 4) motherhood in Pentecostal-Charismatic circles and childcare expectations, 5) the family structure, and 6) negotiating the demands of extended family. Throughout this discussion I will work with Pankhurst's and Houseknecht's (2000: 4) argument that the division between the public and the private sphere, particularly with regard to the institutions of church and family is far more fluid than has previously been suggested. In the conclusion I will draw these various threads together and suggest that the re-construction of the family is part of the more general theme of this thesis, namely, the re-shaping of identity in the changing South Africa.

Motherhood, gender and the family

Under colonialism missionaries tried to instil an ideal of Victorian domesticity in their black female converts (Bowie, Kirkwood et al. 1993; Gaitskell 1998; Moss 1999). The work of Berger (1986; 1987), Gaitskell (1982; 1983a; 1983b; 1997)

and Gaitskell and Kimble (1992) 'seems to suggest that the ideology of domesticity, with its attitudes of dependence, has never really become dominant in South Africa' (Hetherington 1993: 257). But White has argued that previously disadvantaged women 'often want more monogamous, "companionate" marriages, fewer children, and more privacy from other relatives' (in White 1991: 67). My study will support this latter argument showing that for some women, in a particular context, a specific modern, conservative, nuclear family was an ideal.

Colonisation and apartheid eroded the precolonial black family structures (Bozzoli 1991; Godsell 2000). While the extended family household remained a common structure, modernity and the migrant worker system brought about single households, non-family households and female-headed households. Nuclear families – where all the members lived in the same place – did not become the model family structure amongst black families (Brydon and Chant 1989: 159; Collinson, Tollman et al. 2003). Recent research has begun to suggest that black families have not been as fragmented as some suggested. In South Africa the link to the rural family has remained strong and the members of the family in the rural and urban areas consider themselves one family unit although for the majority of the year they may live in different locations (Hosegood and Timaeus 2002; Collinson, Tollman et al. 2003).

Studies of women in Africa are largely synonymous with studies of motherhood as women are conceptualised within the patriarchal system. Walker argues that for South African women, motherhood lay at the core of women's identities and has shaped their political choices (1995: 418). Women invested in motherhood

not just as the 'product of their socialisation or patriarchal ideology' but as something they did out of their own experience (Walker 1995: 435). Groups as divergent as the ANC's Women's League and the Women's Enfranchisement Association of the Union portrayed a narrow concept of both black and white women as mothers and that as such, within South African society, mothers had power to do good.

There have been two main approaches to motherhood in South African studies. The one is a 'collusion with patriarchy' (Walker 1995: 435; Hetherington 1993) in which women define themselves within the patriarchal system. This approach suggested that in South Africa the motherist and feminist movements were two different lobby groups. The motherist movement was more dominant as the 'mother' not 'women' have status in Africa cultures (Wells 1991). Working within a framework that recognises patriarchal systems as the dominant social order Posel (1991) has suggested that women identified with motherhood because as mothers women had social power, which they did not have as mere 'women'.

A second approach has been what Walker has called "difference" where the 'authors emphasise "difference" in the experience, the content and the liberatory potential of different constructions of motherhood' (Walker 1995: 421). Hetherington describes it as the "heroic resisters" approach, where authors regard black women as the noble warriors fighting against apartheid and patriarchal oppression (Hetherington 1993). Gaitskell and Unterhalter (1989), who favour this view, suggested that between the various racial groups the concept of mother was different, and for black women motherhood was more empowering than for

white women. This view was limited in that it presented a stark division between the racial groups. My study will show that during the early part of the twenty-first century the concepts of 'motherhood' and 'mother' have taken on more commonality between racial groups where the members of these groups interacted in the same religious circles. In South Africa the two discourses that have most influenced the concept of motherhood were within the mainline churches and women in political parties (Walker 1995; Gaitskell 1997). No published studies have focused on the concept and meaning of motherhood in the lives of women who go to Pentecostal-Charismatic churches in South Africa. As I examine how these women understood themselves I will suggest that motherhood was not just a patriarchal concept and role which men force women into but something that women actively identify with and use to (re-)construct their own sense of self.

More generally, Hey has argued that

(t)he main route through from childhood to adulthood for young women is maternity. This is because "Infants galvanize attention and offer possibilities for self-distinction" (Fernandez Kelly, 1994: 104). This mothering identity allows girls to signal their version of autonomy, that it might also foreclose other "opportunities" is completely beside the point, since these are deemed non-realizable. This "choice" then arises as the "embodied knowledge" of the most plausible local female identity (Hey 2005: 866).

During the 1950s the rise of consumerism saw the popularisation of a new gender-centred definition of women as full-time stay-at-home mothers and men as breadwinners where morality was bound 'into a tight knot of nuclear domesticity' (Coontz and Parson 1997: 445). For Hays (1996) this is linked with the ideology

of intense mothering that she argues lies at the centre of contemporary mothering ideals. At a time when more women have entered paid employment outside the home there has also emerged 'the commitment to emotionally demanding, financially draining, labor-consuming child rearing' on a scale not seen before (Hays 1996: 4). It seems to be that

the more powerful and all-encompassing the rationalized market becomes, the more powerful becomes its ideological opposition in the logic of intensive mothering (Hays 1996: 99).

Through this chapter I propose to explore how the ideological pressure of intense mothering has been felt by and managed in the teaching of His People and Grace Bible church.

Within both churches there was an ongoing tension about the social and theological significance of motherhood. Some members regarded motherhood as the most important role and function of women, and other people believed that motherhood, while it was a gift from God, was not their primary life purpose. Motherhood, however it was understood, should, in the teaching of His People and Grace Bible church, be entered into as a married woman, and so my analysis begins with marriage in the Pentecostal-Charismatic South African context.

Marriage

Well qualified, previously disadvantaged women have entered the professional work force in larger numbers in South Africa since the mid 1990s. Due to their earning capabilities they were no longer dependent on men or a kinship group for their homes. A major change in property ownership has been identified as an integral reason for changes in family structure (Adams 2004: 1079). This may be

one of the key factors in the appeal of the nuclear family that comfortably fits into a suburban house.

At His People there was a real attempt to try and live out the model of the nuclear family as it was presented in the predominantly white, North American, Pentecostal-Charismatic and Evangelical literature. Grace Bible church on the other hand was trying to negotiate the formation of new African, Christian, nuclear families that still maintained links to the larger extended family. For both churches the nuclear family was the ideal and symbolised success, but how they presented, understood and helped members attain this was different.

Central to both churches was an understanding that the family was a facet of the church and the church an extension of the family. The teachings of these two churches legitimated the nuclear family structure in the lives of their members. Both churches were actively striving to engage men into the life of the church and the family. As part of the alternative modern culture that these churches were creating, a remodelled way of being an African woman or man was emerging.

Both churches actively taught women how to be mothers, wives and homemakers. They ran women's conferences, parent courses and marriage seminars all aimed to help men and women live out the Christian family ideal. Besides the weekly home cell or bible study groups both churches focused much of their attention on providing teaching, support and counselling to help couples create healthy marriages and strong families that lived out this ideal. The husband was regarded as the head of the family and the wife his helpmate and supportive partner. Both

spouses needed to work actively on developing their Christian faith and serving each other in their marriage. No one partner was seen as more important. In an age of feminism, role diversity, and the contemporary township where women have had to take on many of the roles traditionally assigned to men, men have begun to lose their place in the family.

At His People and Grace Bible church the place of the man as the head of the family was firmly re-claimed. Each partner had specific roles in the marriage. Here the masculine roles of provider, leader and protector were clearly ascribed to the men, and women were expected to be nurturing, caring and supportive. Research on the gender division of family roles has suggested that men and women were more fulfilled and had a greater sense of well-being when women were given the space to care for their families and men took on the primary responsibility of providing for the family (Milkie and Peltola 1999: 488). Tichenor's research in the United States highlighted the power of gender stereotypes, which presented men as the provider and women as the homemaker. She suggested that men and women wanted to conform to this stereotype even when their lifestyles were different from these stereotypes or where women earned more than men (Tichenor 1999). This would explain something of the appeal of the Pentecostal-Charismatic churches' rhetoric that legitimated specific gender roles.

It is important to understand this message in the context of South Africa where apartheid broke down many familial structures.

The whole migrant labour thing brought about a real shift. Men began to think that they did not need to take responsibility any more because they could just move on. So when they can't afford it then he just leaves and finds someone else. So there is no taking responsibility and no culture of responsibility. And they can get away with it. Women can apply for support but it's so little that the whole effort is not worth it. So women have had to take responsibility and the families have had to stick together and make do without men (Norma, 32, S, corporate consultant, H.P.).

His People had several seminars and courses on marriage and parenting. Much of this was influenced by Dobson's 'Focus on the Family'⁶³ teaching.

Around marriage there isn't a set teaching of this is what you should be doing. I mean my husband and I run a weekend seminar for married couples. We discuss your purpose, goal and vision. What is it that God has called your marriage to? When two people marry we don't believe that it is just that each person has their own purpose and calling but that as a marriage, as a couple you have purpose and calling. Because we don't want him to have one purpose and then her purpose is completely different and then there is conflict. But, um, we do believe that God puts two people together for a purpose, who you are destined to marry and that. Um, so two is better than one, they are often more effective. When people get married they often become better and better in their ministry and calling and that kind of thing. In the world they so often say that the only reason they marry is for love and all that kind of thing, where personally I don't believe in that. For us it's about being ordained to be together by God (Beverly, 30, M, advertising consultant proprietor, H.P.).

⁶³ See Johnson (1998) for a detailed analysis of the impact of Dobson's teaching on the conservative Christian family ideal.

Beverly said that they did have people who married before they came to the church and where both partners did not have the same vision or where they were not both Christians. The church was strict about only marrying people who had been through their pre-marital courses in which they discuss the couples' goals, visions and help them to think through issues of shared finances, housework, child-care and express the expectations they had of each other. In this extract Beverly claimed that the churches did not have specific teaching on marriage. While there were no set rules about how to run a successful marriage, the course material presented at the different marriage seminars and in the general rhetoric of the church clearly identified male and female roles. The aim was to clarify what was expected in marriage and so limit conflict, enabling couples to present a strong united example of blissful Christian marriage. But this was done in an open way leaving room for interpretation. It allowed the church to remain engaged with the contemporary debates about marriage in which men and women were seen as equal and where housework and childcare work should be shared. His People did not want to seem outdated or irrelevant but they did want to present their conservative message that marriage was still an important institution in contemporary society.

About 40% of the women I met at both churches said that they used to feel that marriage was not for them. This was largely due to the issues of abandonment and relational-poverty discussed in the previous chapter. Once they became Christians and saw examples of good Christian marriages, they began to aspire to this model.

And I thought fine I can do this because God changes people enough for there to be a useful marriage rather than for it to be where the man does his own thing and the women are cooking and cleaning and trying to keep it all together, which had been my impression of marriage (Xandi, 35, M, stay-at-home-mom, H.P.).

At His People the congregation was multi-racial but there were few interracial marriages. I only had one interracial couple in my study, between a black woman and a white American man.

And whilst I have seen quite a bit of inter-racialism in couples, it develops far more easily along a white woman, black guy. I think the stereotypes of who is beautiful is incredibly difficult to break and plays a role. And those are only overcome when you get to know someone personally as a friend. And as they work together and become friends we may see more white men marrying black women in the coming years (Janet, 33, S, journalist, H.P.).

Grace Bible church on the other hand had no interracial marriages, and its two primary concerns regarding marriage were, balancing the expectations and experiences of African marriage and Christian marriage, and engaging men so that they became committed to their marriages. Over the average of a year Grace Bible church had fewer conferences, seminars or courses on marriage than His People, but both churches gave about the same amount of time to the topic in sermons. At Grace Bible church, as at His People, the pastors lived out the ideal of a modern, nuclear family and marriage. The two primary concerns of the churches were dealt with through a message of responsibility. In a Christian marriage the traditional roles of the man as the head of the family were not taken away but they came with responsibility. A husband was expected to make a

complete commitment to his wife, to provide for her, respect her, and care for her. By virtue of his position as husband he was not culturally justified to demand that his wife cook, clean and care for him, neither did this model of marriage go all the way to embrace the message of the popular professional culture in South Africa, so often reflected in female magazines, which advocated a complete blurring of gender roles.

With this active message of male responsibility the church also addressed their second central concern, namely teaching men and women who did not grow up in nuclear families what their roles and duties were. Pastor Sono was deeply aware that so many young men had not grown up with father figures and had not learnt what was expected from a Christian husband. In his courses and sermons he tried to address these issues and, like *His People*, his message was couched in a masculine language that aimed at making this teaching appealing to men. In a corporate-style language the pastors urged men to ‘take ownership’, ‘form partnerships’, ‘be respectable’ and ‘be accountable’ for all areas of their lives and this included a commitment to honour, respect and care for their wives by being considerate and faithful husbands. They presented an alternative to the absent irresponsible husband, the dominating traditional-African husband and the post-modern emasculated man.

The women I met supported this message because they felt that the media, African traditional norms and township cultures all disempowered and disrespected women.

I put a lot of blame on men for a lot of issues. If you look at the mess the whole world is in the advertising and how women are portrayed and then African culture how women are looked down on. Then how men are so sexual around women always coming on to them. Young guys just flirt with women all the time. It's just a cultural thing to be flirting with women all the time. They will never outgrow that (Lucy, 30, M, investment banker, H.P.).

These women were not passive wives but were attracted to the image of a wife presented at these two churches because they legitimated the desire women had for faithful, responsible and respectful husbands. The women found the masculinization of the Christian message of male responsibility empowering and liberating. Women were prepared to exercise a certain degree of submission if it meant that their marriages would be stable and fruitful.

Wifely submission

Both churches maintained a strong division of roles between men and women, justified by the fact that they believed men and women had different strengths and weaknesses. On this basis they explained submission, not as something negative but as the natural order because God had gifted and made men and women different, and every person would be most fulfilled if they were living out the life God had called them to. This meant that women did the things they were 'called' to do and were not expected or forced to take on the roles and responsibilities of men.

Gladys (33, M, lawyer, G.B.) explained that from the number of popular American Christian books on the family, marriage and relationships that she had

read, and Grace Bible church's teaching on the subject, she believed that the nuclear family with the husband as the head and the wife as his supportive helper was the biblical ideal. She explained that each spouse had different roles in the family and distinct areas over which they had power and control. Primarily she described herself as being the 'spiritual warrior' in the family. It was her duty to pray for her family, to protect them by 'covering them in prayer', and to guide them spiritually and emotionally. She also made the decisions about the every day running of the house and the general finances. Her husband's role was to be the 'warrior at the door of the house': to protect the family from outside harm and to have a vision for where the family was going. It was his responsibility to oversee the large expenses and to ensure that the family was provided for. 'We both have power in the family and in some ways I have more power because I oversee the spiritual things', she explained. Submitting to her husband meant following where he was taking them as a family but she had to pray for him to make the right decisions. She felt that she was not inferior to him, if anything she had a potent spiritual influence over him. Both Gladys and her husband ran their own businesses and in the world of work she believed that men and women were equal. Some months she would earn more than her husband and at other times he would earn more.

The vast majority of women echoed Gladys' view. But some of the unmarried women were still wrestling with the concept of submission and they felt that this showed that they were not yet ready for marriage. Submission was also seen in very broad terms and often down-played as marriage was spoken of as a partnership of equals, as this extract shows

I mean my husband and I we submit to one another and I submit to him obviously as head of the home, but we have always had this tremendous partnership. On Sundays I sing in the band so he looks after the children and lets me go to practices. He makes it possible for me to do my ministry (Pam, 42, M, Orthodontist, H.P.).

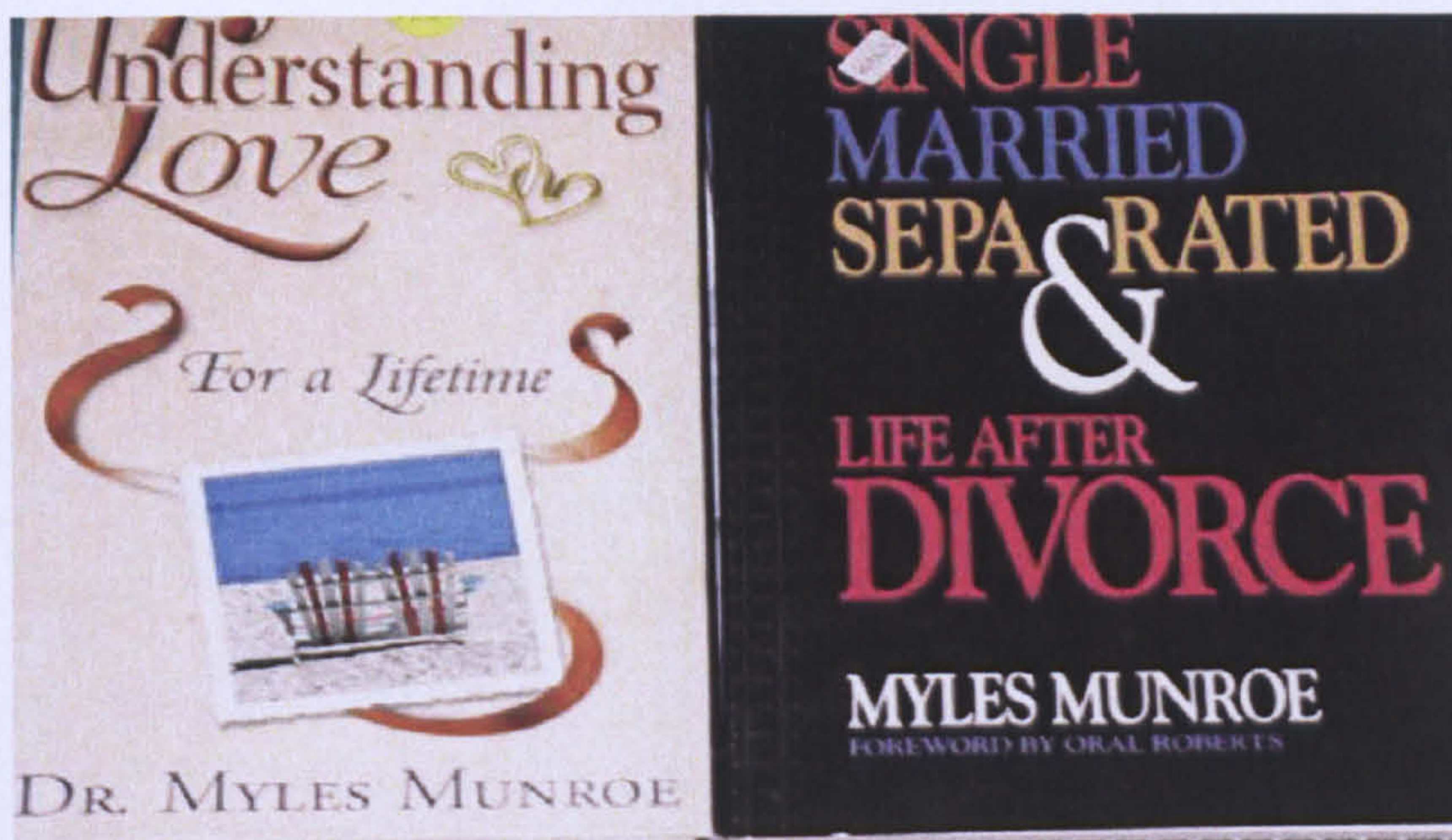


Figure 9.1 Dr Myles Munroe was one of the most popular writers amongst the women I interviewed.

Many women justified submission, as Vuyo did in the extract below. They explained that many of the problems in society arose because women did not submit to their husbands and tried to take on the role of the man in the household.

I have realised that in most families where the man is not the head of the house he is not treated well but when he is then he is treated well. If he is not the head then he loses his power and then the children look up to their mother and then they lose the respect for the father because they copy the mother and that isn't good, and it's not good for the male ego. You have to take care of the male ego then they are better (Vuyo, 29, S, manager in municipal department, G.B.)

As women spoke of marriage and submission it emerged as a sort of alternative to contemporary marriage and therefore a possible hedge against divorce and disappointment.

While all the women I spoke to supported submission in a form that they found comfortable, they were all adamant that wifely submission did not make women inferior to or dependent on men. Tumi represented this general view when she said

as you have to be obedient you don't have to be totally dependent on a man. My mother always taught me to have initiative, don't totally rely on a man, for cosmetics and everything (Tumi, 31, M, H.R. manager, G.B.).

Wifely submission was one of the most unanimous features between the racial groups and the two churches. It was specific to this Pentecostal-Charismatic theology, and something that these working women were embracing in a flexible organic manner. Differences between the church communities began to emerge, however, when women spoke about the difficulties they experienced in their marriages.

Negotiating the difficulties of marriage

Expectations of men, the extended families and the church were the three main things women identified as sources of discontent in their marriages. At Grace Bible church, far more than His People, women complained that men were unfaithful and could not be trusted. Even men who were members of Grace Bible church were known to be having affairs with other women.

For Christian women the hardest thing is men, the men that are always wanting you to do things. You have to do all the house and they don't help you even if they are not working. Then you work and they just do nothing and eat your money. Then at Grace Bible church I found other women that are helping me to grow and to deal with all these problems (Patience, 45, M, cleaner, G.B.).

This working class woman was one of a group of impoverished women whom I interviewed to get a better understanding of the general Grace Bible church community. She, like the majority of professional women, said that having a husband who did not work was the hardest thing in a marriage.

To help the women we need to get the men employed . . . I heard this person say that they wish that with liberty there would be opportunities for men. There is so much for women now but there is not so much for men and then they go home and they can't provide for their families and then they go to drink and crime. To help women we need to get the men employed. Being with a woman makes them feel that they have power and that they are a man. But this is because they don't feel like a man because they have no work (Mamati, 35, S, human resources manager, G.B.).

These views resonate with a study that looked at the data from 771 married men and women in America and found that marital discord was not affected by a wife's increase in income, but a husband's decrease in income. Marital discord was also a key factor in explaining a wife's increase in income (Rogers 1999). The message of hard work and responsibility preached at both churches appealed to these women and, like women in Latin America, this encouraged them to stand

up to their husbands and ask them to try and find work (Brusco 1986; Martin 1998).

While some women found it difficult that their husbands did not work, men complained about women who tried too hard to be successful in the world of work and did not fulfil their expectations of a good wife.

They are expected to nurture, to care. Women are also under pressure to prove something. They feel that they have been left out of this man's world and then they feel under pressure to prove that they can do it in a man's world and then they go over board. They actually become like men. They should still be available to their children, to still be good lovers to their husbands, to still maintain their attractiveness (David, 34, D, consultant engineer proprietor, G.B.).

About a third of the women I interviewed said that they found it difficult to juggle the expectations of a career and a family, but as Christian women they were learning how to prioritise. They said that they realised that the primary responsibility was to be available to their husbands and children. Not only did their faith give them a meaning system, but it legitimated their ideal of a nuclear family and justified how they should prioritise the multiple demands made on them. More controlled research needs to be done to determine if this reduced tension and was a factor in the greater sense of well-being which they commented that they had as they grew in their faith.

Not all men wanted their women to stay at home, nor were they necessarily unhelpful and demanding. At Grace Bible church all the women who were married also worked full time. They said their husbands helped with housework,

but they also had some form of domestic help in the house, either an unemployed relative who stayed with them and helped with the housework, or salaried domestic help. This meant that unlike America and Europe housework was less of a source of tension in the marriages I was privy to. In all these marriages it was the women who employed and oversaw the work of the domestic helper. At Grace Bible one woman I interviewed was able to speak to me because her husband made us dinner while we chatted. All the women said that they appreciated the help from their husbands but they would have liked to have been able to be 'better housewives' and 'cook all his meals'. Younger women who were not married tried to make it clear that they expected their husbands to help in the house and they were not going to do all the cooking and cleaning.

Housework and economic restraints caused tension in marriages but the expectations of the two churches, while at times empowering, also caused difficulties for some women.

The church (HP) is so hypocritical. We are not open and honest, we pretend that people are in good marriages and they aren't, you know. Everybody pretends that it's going wonderfully and it's not, and we need to be open and honest and serious, you know (Rachel, 32, S, legal consultant proprietor, H.P.).

No matter how much time I spend with them and they tell me that their marriages have gone through difficult times and that they are accountable to this and the other, um, it just strikes me as being such a striving for perfection, but I just think instinctively – you are going to come a cropper (Janet, 33, S, journalist, H.P.).

Both these single women expressed more elegantly what married women tried to say. Yet marriage, with all its tensions, was largely about creating a Christian, stable, and loving environment in which to raise children. In the next section I

will look at the ways in which motherhood was understood in both churches and a new form of motherhood that women were trying to establish.

Motherhood and childcare

At His People and Grace Bible church being a mother was regarded as one of the most important, God-given roles of a woman. A woman's status was linked to having children and, as in other religious circles, children were seen as a blessing from God (Sewpaul 1999). This supports more general studies on family size in South Africa that suggested that women gained status by having children, not by the number of children they had (Sam, Peltzer et al. 2005: 358). In contrast to my study, this study also showed that there were no clear economic, emotional or social factors that explained why women in South Africa wanted children (2005: 372-3). At His People and Grace Bible particular ideologies explained the way women understood the role and significance of motherhood.



Figure 9.2 The most popular book on raising children and one of the most popular books on marriage displayed at both churches.

At His People and Grace Bible church there was little difference between black, white and coloured women in the actual practice of motherhood. They were all the primary care givers to their children, and were responsible for feeding, clothing and supervising their children. They ensured that children did their homework, got to school, were taken to the doctor and were emotionally supported. The difference came in the connotations that women associated with motherhood. For the black and coloured women from both His People and Grace Bible church the dominant positive role model they had grown-up with was the competent, heroic, strong mother who kept the household together, raised her children, found work even when there seemed to be none, and often looked after her family alone because her husband was away working or had left his family; as Ma Agnes epitomises in the popular soap opera 'Isidingo'. The white women were either influenced by the mother as the person who sacrificed her own career in order to stay at home, look after her children, be the emotional centre of her family and ensure that her husband remain in the family by taking good care of him; alternatively they held the superwomen, full time career women and competent mother as their ideal.

Hays (1997) has recognised these (western and mainly white) cultural contradictions between the mother-at-home and the mother-at-work, in contemporary middle class American motherhood, showing that in an age where women have the most freedom to enter the workplace they were also expected to give the most intense forms of care to their children. His People, with its particular focus on stay-at-home-mothering, was offering a way out of this contradiction by valuing motherhood above paid work and presenting intense

childcare as the unquestioned ideal. Women from Grace Bible church came out of a different, working class trajectory in which working mothers held a different meaning. Boris (1994) and Garey (1999) focused on working class mothers in America and have argued that for them there was not a contradiction or choice between working and mothering – they have always done the two in tandem as part of mothering. This has meant providing for the basic material and physical needs of their children. At Grace Bible church the upwardly mobile women I met aspired to staying at home to care for their young children but all the women who had children worked full time. The emphasis of the church was that parenting, both for men and women, meant caring for the physical and emotional needs of children and that in a busy working life time had to be found for children as much of the extended family in the form of aunts, uncles, grandparents and older siblings were not as close at hand in the new nuclear family model they were promoting.

The ideal of motherhood promoted by both churches was that the mother was the emotional centre of the family. She prayed for her family and so protected them spiritually. As a woman she understood that her primary purpose was to be a good mother and this meant investing in the welfare and upbringing of her children by being a stay-at-home-mother who was available to support her children practically, emotionally and spiritually.

For 85% of the women I met, both black and white, their ideal was to start their own business and work from home. They saw this as the best way to fulfil the religious, economic and social expectations they themselves, their families and

broader society placed on them. The 15% who did not want to begin their own businesses were both black and white and said that they wanted to work in an office environment and not have to be at home all the time.

Amongst the professional black and white women at His People 2 (11%) of the women I interviewed were stay-at-home mothers, 2 (11%) mothers worked part-time, 4 (21%) of the women were full-time working mothers and only 1 (5%) of all the working women was a single mother. Amongst the working women a third ran their own businesses. At Grace Bible church only 2 (7%) of the working women I met ran their own businesses. None of the professional women I interviewed were stay-at-home mothers, 1 mother (4% of the working professional women but 10% of the mothers) worked part-time and 9 (90%) of the mothers worked full-time. In this cohort 3 (13%) of all the working women were single mothers. Of the non-professional women 2 (33%) were unemployed, 2 (33%) had temporary work and 3 (50%) were single mothers. Studies in Germany and the United States showed that 'marriage and childbearing continue to influence exit from and entry into paid work in both countries' (Drobnic, Blossfeld et al. 1999: 133). In South Africa my research suggests that previously racial discrimination has also played a significant role in women's movements into and out of the labour market.

Women saw themselves as held by God to be accountable for the upbringing of their children. They believed they needed to show their children 'God's way' and 'God's love' and that could only be done through quality and quantity time.

Your first responsibility is to your child and this is the most important way in which a mother honours God. As a stay-at-home-mom you need to be sure that you are pouring into your child's life and also the community. You need to be involved in the school and the teaching. So that this is a large area of influence and ministry (Beverly, 30, M, advertising agent proprietor, H.P.).

Beverly also believed that for her it was important to keep working because this was her ministry and purpose and she needed to be involved in her ministry in the church. If she gave them up just to raise her child then she felt she would not be fulfilling what was her calling.

Penny (29, M, stay-at-home-mom, H.P.) felt that staying at home was a sacrifice that she had made so that she could give her child the very best Christian home and upbringing. She had been an executive marketing manager and admitted that she really missed work. If she had not believed so strongly that as a Christian mother she needed to stay at home, she said that she would have gone back to work. The church had several moms' groups to help mothers feel less isolated and lonely as they stayed at home while most of their colleagues and friends went back to work. For Penny and her husband there was never a discussion that her husband should stay at home, although they had earned similar salaries. It was his job to go out and work.

None of the women, either black or white, felt that men should do the same share of childcare work as women. 'Women are better at this than men' (Khanyi, 29, S, assistant director hospital social worker, G.B.). Allen and Alan (1999) have shown that this approach inhibits the involvement of fathers in family work in religious families. Research shows that the employment rate of the fathers

directly impacts on the stability of the family and the development of the children, more than whether the mother works or not (Parcel and Menaghan 1994). 'Our data supports the notion that fathers' work schedules may be important pathways through which children absorb appropriate behavioural norms and develop verbal skills that serve as the foundation for the future cognitive attainment' of the child (Parcel and Menaghan 1994: 1003). The general message of both His People and Grace Bible church that fathers needed to provide for their families and commit to full time employment for the benefit of their families was therefore supported by this research.

Being a stay-at-home-mom or part-time mom was a financial luxury that not all members at His People or Grace Bible church could afford.

I come from a culture where women did not stay at home based on poverty. You might want to stay at home with your babies but you could not afford it. You had to be everything to everyone (Carmen, 30, S, physiotherapist, H.P.).

Garey (1999: 4) emphasises that the majority of research on women and work focused on professional women in North America, when in reality the majority of working mothers have been semi-skilled and unskilled women, who like the South African women mentioned above, had no choice but to work.

For all the young unmarried women whom I met at Grace Bible church their ideal was to be stay-at-home-mothers. Not only would this mean that they would be fulfilling the church's teaching, but it would be a sign of their financial success and the stability of their marriages. Several of the young women both at His People and Grace Bible church said that they had not wanted to stay at home when they had their children but as they became more committed Christians and

learnt more about their church's teaching, they began to change their minds. 'Before I joined HP I saw myself as staying home for 3 months and then going back, but that has changed now' (Jennifer, 28, S, financial analyst, H.P.). With their involvement in these churches came a change in the way women understood and lived out their family life.

The significance of the nuclear family

Teaching on parenting went hand in hand with teaching on the family. At both churches the leaders promoted a style of parenting that was characterised by discipline, high levels of interaction with their children and encouraged warm expressions of love. In this, these churches reflected the parenting styles common in North American conservative religious families, which some research has shown to be advantageous for young children (Wilcox 1998).

Under apartheid the African family had become dislocated, disjointed and in many cases disintegrated. 'Like you will find that one of the things that apartheid did was, your father came home once in a month if they were lucky, or once a year' (Paul, 26, S, pastoral assistant, H.P.).

The other problem is the disintegration of family. It has disintegrated so much that it's very difficult for it to be playing its role and I think the future of SA is really dependent on the role of the family and the church (Tembi, 25, S, client liaison, H.P.).

Lerato pointed out the emotional difficulties of disrupted families

Dr Eva says that men really have to be good fathers to their girls. Girls love to be praised and say you are beautiful. So when you have a father who does these

things then when you meet a guy who says “oh you look beautiful, you look lovely, you are special,” and then you think it’s love and you don’t know anything else and you really want to hear this. Then there was this girl her father was always telling her she was a queen and she was so strong and she never got into any funny things (Lerato, 32, S, cost accountant, G.B.).

Rachel (32, S, legal consultant proprietor, H.P.) spent a lot of time in our interviews explaining to me how she felt that South Africa would only become stable politically and economically when the family structures of South Africa had stabilised.

On the one hand, apartheid attacked patterns of family authority by demeaning and humiliating black adults. The liberation movement eroded these patterns further by supporting youth militancy (Godsell 2000: 215).

In my interviews women spoke of their own experiences and said that they supported the churches’ efforts especially in getting men to take their parenting role seriously. They felt that they had to deal with many emotional scars because their fathers had had no knowledge of how to be ‘good enough’ fathers⁶⁴. The teaching on family relationship, and what Reay (2004; 2005) would call emotional capital was another way in which both churches helped members develop capital resources that their members felt they lacked in their lives.

For many women their churches not only taught them about family life but also provided them with the ‘family’ they never had. ‘I never grew up with a father figure so for me relating to God the father has been a battle. The whole role of the father has not been lived out in my life’ (Grace, 26, S, assistant pastor, H.P.).

⁶⁴ This is a development of Winnicott’s (1982) idea of the ‘good enough mother’.

‘My dad never featured in my life and so Pastor Sono was like a spiritual dad’
(Vuyo, 29, S, manager in municipal department, G.B.).

As I explored in chapter 6, African traditional practices were a major concern in both churches and a central issue that emerged for all the women I met was not only African cultural practices, but also the language they were raising their children in. In the literature about families in South Africa, this has not yet come up as a critical point, but it is an emotive topic in the planning of school curricula (Heugh 2000). Most of the mothers I met spoke more English to their children than any other language but both black and white mothers were concerned that their children should learn an African language better and were aware of the consequences of the languages falling into disuse. Language and culture are deeply interrelated and as both Grace Bible church and His People were trying to establish a new contemporary African Christian culture, they took language issues seriously.

At His People, Xandi (35, M, stay-at-home-mom, H.P.) had set up a play group for children belonging to His People. The aim of the group was to help both black and white children learn isiZulu. Her husband was isiZulu and she wanted her children to have at least a conversation level competence in the language, but found it difficult to help her young children learn isiZulu as well as English when they had no amaZulu⁶⁵ friends. The white mothers were keen to give their children some exposure to an African language. The morning that I met with Xandi was one of the play group mornings. All morning long the children were

⁶⁵ amaZulu refers to people who speak isiZulu.

encouraged only to speak isiZulu. Xandi had three amaZulu women worked as helpers with the small group of 10 children.

I spoke with some of the mothers when they came to fetch their children. Both the black and white mothers were excited about the group because they felt that they were keeping isiZulu alive by passing it on to their children. The black mothers particularly appreciated the attention to isiZulu customs and felt proud when they went home and their toddlers remembered to thank grandparents in the traditional manner. Like the other His People women whom I met Xandi was opposed to *lobola*, any form of participation in ancestor ceremonies and offerings made at funerals, but she did want her children to be accepted by her parents and relatives. For her the purpose of her isiZulu play group was to ensure that her children had a link to their African cultural heritage.

When we go home (to the rural areas where her in-laws and parents lived) I want them to feel a part of things and not be excluded or rude. You know there are so many small manners that are just different between the cultures and if the children don't know these then everyone thinks they are rude, I don't want that (Xandi, 35, M, stay-at-home-mom, H.P.).

As has been emerging through this study the links that women at His People had to their African culture were weaker than those that women had at Grace Bible church. Xandi's play group was one of the few examples I found of how women were establishing new links to their African culture and working to keep it as part of their identity.

Grace Bible church was trying to encourage people to maintain their heritage, yet all the services were in English. Women like Pastor Gege were particularly concerned about the generation gap that existed between parents and their children, and the fact that the children could not speak any of the vernacular languages contributed to this gap. Her children went to private, previously white schools, and she was sorry that they could not speak an African language competently. But she and her husband, Pastor Sono, like so many other women felt that it was more important for their children to learn English well. And like many other families they found it difficult to translate the day's events, which took place in English, into a vernacular language when they got home at night.

But then we come home and we are tired and then we are lazy to teach them our language, because we just want to speak English because everything we do is in English (Lesley, 38, M, bank manager, G.B.).

At Grace Bible church they had tried to set up Saturday schools in which they taught African languages to children and adults, but the programme had not been successful.

Part of the problem is that anything that you do that doesn't come out well then it's a black thing. Anything that is a success then it's seen to be white. Unconsciously that is how we reason, that anything black is negative and a failure, or second class and what is white is successful. In your own language you can't be a successful person (Gege, 42, M, pastor, G.B.).

Grace Bible church was trying to alter this stereotype.

The attention of this chapter has been on the nuclear family, yet I have often mentioned that women came from single parent homes. In my study only 10% of

the women I met at His People and 25% of the women I met at Grace Bible church were single parents. Neither the women that I spoke to nor the churches paid much attention to the needs of single parents. The concerns of language and dual-parent parenting received so much attention from these two churches because they were integral to establishing a contemporary, successful, African nuclear family. As I have shown in the previous chapters the central message of both churches was that each believer had a God given purpose for their lives and that they also had the potential to fulfil that purpose. Part of this message was that prosperity came by living in nuclear families.

Godsell's (2000) research on religion and more traditional black South African families showed that these family structures did not offer social networks or financial support that empowered entrepreneurs or encouraged family members to excel at work. She argued that under apartheid businesses were given little or no status in black communities. This finding was echoed by Cindy (24, S, events co-ordinator proprietor, G.B.) who said that when she started to work at a large retail store over the weekends as a teenager, people in her Soweto neighbourhood looked down on her. Godsell found that black entrepreneurs were always alone and had no family or religious network supporting them (2000: 217). Within the more traditional African moral system money had to be shared with all those in the extended family and should not be saved up to be re-invested into a business run by a few members of the family (2000: 221). Under apartheid money was also negatively associated with the oppressors.

Ten years into the New South Africa and financial success had become the dream of virtually every South African. Material wealth was the sign of political liberation and most people wanted to have a part of this new liberty. The first black company was listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in 1995 and was financed by a number of trade unions and African Independent Churches (Godsell 2000: 230). Grace Bible church and His People offered their members the strategic networks they needed to help them realise success, and the mentoring and life-skills to re-shape their life-styles to deal with their prosperity. Comparison between several studies of the family and religion showed that by supporting the ideal of the family, religion has provided formal support for the family, encouraged establishment of positive relations between members and helped families to create 'closure in social ties by linking friends and family members in the same social group' (Pearce and Axinn 1998: 812). By focusing attention on the nuclear family, already imbued with connotations of whiteness, wealth and middle class living, these churches were also legitimating a break with the larger extended African family structures that hindered the strivings of an individual driven by ambition. How the two churches negotiated new forms of connection to the extended family varied, but the issues they faced were the same.

Pressures from the extended family

At Grace Bible church and His People 50% of all the previously disadvantaged professional women and none of the historically advantaged women I met were supporting their extended families. Becoming a Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian had not meant that they all stopped supporting their families. These women also had life insurances and were paying off their houses and or cars. This

meant that while they were honouring their Christian commitment to care for those in need, they did not feel obligated, as under African cultural practices, to give all they had to the communal family. The issues that required more careful attention were the rites of passage and how these were celebrated within the extended family. Micaela di Leonardo's (1987) study showed that women were not only involved in paid work and house work but also in kinship work. Women took seriously their own and their families' connectedness to their kinship networks and they worked to maintain them. I have already discussed *lobola* and weddings, but funerals emerged as one of the most contentious issues. It was the teachings of their churches that legitimated women's focus on their work and meant that they should not feel guilty when they were not able to get seven days off work to participate in the week long mourning customs before a funeral. The examples cited below show the varying degrees to which different women related to African traditional practices and the breaks that they had made with this culture.

Letty (26, M, events company project manager, G.B.) had met her husband at Grace Bible church and had been married for just over a year when I met her. She said that for her the most difficult thing in her marriage had been the consequences of extended family expectations and HIV/Aids. In her husband's family many of the middle aged and young adults had died of Aids. The consequence of this was that she and her husband had to take on the role of a mature married couple within the extended family, taking part in *lobola* negotiations, organising weddings and funerals and helping to settle family disputes. She explained that her parents were both Christians and they avoided

the ritual gatherings in their families as much as possible. In the broader isiSotho and isiZulu cultures, in which she and her husband had grown up, people only learned about cultural practices and rituals when they were old enough to participate in them. This meant that as the young couple were courting and once they were married they were not informed of the rituals and customs surrounding these rites of passage, beyond what they were expected to do.

When my husband's cousin passed away we had to go to do all the African things for her because the elders were dead. Then we didn't know anything because we are both Christians. Now we have elderly people who have lived with the culture and they are wanting to do all the discussions and the ancestral things and then we didn't want to do this because they are wrong. Then we didn't know all the things that you have to do. I don't know them because they were not passed on to me from my parents.

Tumi had pressure from her mother who did not understand that due to her work commitments she could not fulfil her cultural obligations

The first funeral that I went to was of my husband's family. My mother has this expectation of how she wants to be represented by me. So there is a lot of conflict between my mom and myself. In our black culture they will expect you to be there the whole week, but there isn't much to do, because I am not responsible for the food and all you do is serve them tea and coffee all day. But if you work like me, I can't take 5 days off for a funeral' (Tumi, 32, M, human resources manager, G.B.).

Tembi (26, S, client liaison officer, H.P.) lost her father when she was in her late teens and her mother when she was twenty-four. When her mother died, she and her sister had the funeral and reception at the Methodist church where her mother

had been a member. They hired a catering company and offered tea with cake and sandwiches. Many of the extended family were upset that they had not followed traditional customs and have not spoken to them since. She explained that while growing up funerals were central to the rhythm of their social life and a significant factor in what it meant to be African; it identified them as African.

And also people have this thing in the township on a Saturday. People try to find out where the funerals and weddings are going to be and they just go there. That's how they spend their Saturdays. Also people use it for meeting people and picking up women. Picking up men or guys. People go to the hair salon in the morning, they have their hair done. Wear the best clothes, and, and many start early to get ready, they just say there is a funeral in that street, let's go (Tembi, 26, S, client liaison officer, H.P.).

These extracts show how important funerals are in contemporary African culture. His People gave little guidance in helping women maintain a balance between the expectations of their extended families and their own individual desires. What they did offer was a break from the traditional practices. For women who wanted to make this break and focus on the nuclear families, His People legitimated this choice. Grace Bible church tried to offer a world-view that integrated African and Christian practices in such a way that women still had contact with their extended families but did not feel obligated to fulfil all the practices, many of which were not practically possible for a career woman.

In a different context Gladys (33, M, lawyer, G.B.) also struggled with the expectations of her family who were not born again and wanted things to be done in accordance with African traditional religious practices.

Once I began to understand God more then I could be free to leave the ancestors. I grew up with a mother that was not born again and she loved the ancestor things. So we learnt that if you don't do this then what you are doing won't work. So who are you to change things? But the more I grew in God I was able to be more free to let go of this. Now I was faced with a challenge. The umbilical cord for my baby is still there, I believe that it has to fall within 7 days and it hasn't. Then I took her to the clinic and they said don't worry. But it still hasn't fallen. Then my mother came and asked if it has fallen and I said no. So now she wants me to take my *sangoma*. Then I prayed for her. So I was changing her nappy and then I saw that it had fallen and now my mother can come and see her. I don't want my mother to see me so worried (Gladys, 33, M, lawyer, G.B.).

For Gladys her Christian faith both created and legitimated the tension she experienced with her mother. By not going to the *sangoma* she expressed the extent to which she had made a break with her African traditional religious roots and her extended family who still practised this religion and highlighted the new contemporary African Christian identity she had taken on as a working mother in a nuclear family.

Conclusion

The message of His People and Grace Bible church was that men needed to take responsibility for their financial success, their own salvation, their families and move out of stereotypes that excuse irresponsible male behaviour on the grounds of apartheid history or in order to gain social acceptability. This masculine Christian message presented clearly defined gender roles for men and women. Men were re-instated as the head of the family and women expected to submit to

their husbands. My research showed that women were prepared to be submissive if it meant that their husbands treated them with respect and cared for their families. Echoing findings in North America, the women I met had an organic approach to submission, and the way they lived it out varied from a sort of lip service to the idea of submission to clearly handing over the management of the family to their husbands. The women in my study found that their churches legitimated their desire for a nuclear family and helped them to prioritise the demands that family and work made on them.

Motherhood was understood in both churches to be the most important role that any woman could fulfil. My study has focused not only on the interrelationship between family and religion but also on religion and work as most of the women in my study worked. These young women, either while still single or as mothers, were trying to shape a new understanding of motherhood that did not idealise the heroic strong African mother or the sacrificial stay-at-home mother. While these women wanted to be respected before they became mothers, in both churches motherhood still moved women into a category where they received more respect than childless women. At His People the ideal was clearly that women should stay at home with their young children until the children were old enough to go to school. I met both black and white mothers who were stay-at-home-moms. At Grace Bible church I did not meet any mothers who stayed at home full time out of choice. For many of the women at Grace Bible church this was an ideal but not one that they could financially afford. The church placed far more emphasis on balancing a career and child care than promoting single income family structures.

In the post-apartheid South Africa one of the most important roles that both His People and Grace Bible church were fulfilling was teaching people parenting and marriage skills. Most of the young parents I met had been negatively affected by the disruption that apartheid had brought to African families. They wanted to move away from the models of African families, extended families, single parent families and migrant families that they had grown up with and embrace a nuclear family model, which they identified as symbolising success. Both churches were not only providing members with mentoring and strategic networks to help them realise material prosperity but they were also legitimating their desire to create a new type of family in which the needs of the nuclear family members were the central priority. This did not mean that both churches advocated a complete break with the extended family, but they did help members to distance themselves from the demands of in-laws and relatives.

In the previous chapter I showed that one of the central differences between Grace Bible church and His People had been in their attitude to *lobola*. These variations arose because the two churches had conflicting approaches to the degree of association a Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian should have with African culture. This was evidenced again in the way members responded to funerals and births. At His People the members were striving to break away from elaborate African funeral practices. Many of the members had no knowledge of cultural taboos and practices and so chose to do things in line with the western Christian practices of their church. Grace Bible church on the other hand wanted to remain part of the community and encouraged members to honour their dead in a manner that was respectful of African practices without engaging in African religious rituals.

Women at Grace were generally more aware of African traditional customs and were struggling to break away from many of these superstitions.

Both His People and Grace Bible church were presenting a clear message of the nuclear family as the ideal. This supported their more general message of individual success and purpose. The nuclear family was not a new concept to South African black families but it was not a common model. For the women I met the nuclear family was understood as a sign of success, modernity and freedom. Grace Bible church was trying to present a way to be Christian, modern and African and so they encouraged the nuclear family but emphasised *lobola*, community weddings and funerals as ways to cultivate a contemporary African culture. His People was far more western in style and proposed the Christian nuclear family as the alternative to African family traditions and the secular families where the divorce rate in South Africa is over 50%. By aligning themselves with these images of a Christian wife and mother the women I met were re-shaping their identities and seeing themselves as successful Christian wives and mothers who were striving to establish nuclear families.

Chapter 10

Conclusion

Overview of the thesis

The devastating force of apartheid and the determined hope in the present have been central threads along this journey. All the men and women whom I interviewed - even those who left His People and Grace Bible church - believed that their life chances had been enhanced by the social and cultural capital they had gained through their participation in the activities and teaching of both churches. Amongst the plethora of identities and cultural claims pressing on these women both churches offered a meaning system that helped them negotiate and prioritise these demands. Central to the appeal of both churches were the different forms of homogenous, sanitised 'African culture' they offered. At His People the approach was one akin to that of 'Oreos' where people selectively engaged with African culture and practices that were regarded as 'trendy'. Their main point of stylisation was a westernised, mainly North American, conservative Christian approach that re-coded certain secular status symbols as markers of spiritual success. In contrast, Grace Bible church had a 'Romary Cream' approach, which interacted more with African culture but edited out the parts it found problematic. At the heart of this approach was a return to the community instead of the very individualistic sentiments of the 'Oreo'. Both His People and Grace Bible church, either as 'Oreos' or 'Romary Creams', offered women an alternative to the hedonistic Y culture and Lexion Kultcha of modern, urban Johannesburg. The collective culture of both churches supported upward mobility, a concentration on

economic gain rather than political involvement and a prioritisation of the individual before the community or extended family.

The contribution this thesis makes towards our understanding of the New South Africa is to examine the working hypothesis that some urban, young, previously disadvantaged women in South Africa were attracted to Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian (PCC) churches because these organisations helped them develop personal identities and negotiate the contemporary networks of social, political and economic power. It emerged that the networks of power which most affected the women I interviewed were: the family, their churches, African traditional religious and cultural practices, the work place and the politics of Affirmative Action in it and South Africa's changing popular culture. To explore this hypothesis my research engaged with contemporary theories of Pentecostalism, gender and the family, and had 6 main objectives that shaped the 9 research questions laid out in chapter 3, *Strategies and Methods*.

1. Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity

I began the literature review in chapter 2 with a periodization of some salient developments within the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements suggesting that in Africa a form of Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity (PCC) has recently emerged, which emphasised the importance of the physically healing, spiritually empowering and/ or materially enriching work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individual members – although not necessarily evidenced by speaking in tongues. Through this section, and the description of Johannesburg His People Christian Ministries in chapter 4 and Soweto Grace Bible Church in chapter 5, I fulfilled the

first of my objectives providing a historical approach to Pentecostalism that engaged with the most recent forms of the movement to emerge in South Africa. Chapters 4 and 5 showed that women occupied a variety of positions in both churches including senior pastors and leaders of specific areas of ministry, but in neither church were women allowed to be the head of the church.

2. Religious meaning in the social construction of identity

Against the backdrop of all the dynamic social and political changes in South Africa my second target was to explore the identities that the women I interviewed were creating for themselves. Using a social constructionist approach I argued that gender, motherhood, race, class and identity were socially constructed in a dialectic relationship with the networks of social, political, economic and ideological power. This was a theme that I developed throughout the thesis, but it was particularly in chapter 6, *Church Membership and the Negotiation of Cultural Dislocation*, that I showed how women from a variety of different backgrounds used their faith to make meaning of social and personal change in their lives. Through this process they were also re-shaping their identities as modern African Christians and distancing themselves from African traditional religions and practices.

3. A sanitised, modern, African Christianity

This thesis also dealt with the process of shaping a contemporary African Christian identity and thereby accomplished my third objective to detail the interrelationship between African, Western and Christian religious and cultural systems in the New South Africa. Grace Bible church and His People had

conflicting approaches to the degree of association a Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian should have with African culture. This was evidenced by the way members related to *lobola*, weddings, births and funerals. At His People the members were striving to break away from demanding and restrictive African cultural and religious practices. Many of the members had no knowledge of cultural taboos and practices and made life-style choices according to the western Christian practices of the church. Grace Bible church on the other hand wanted to remain part of the community and encouraged members to participate in African cultural practices but not to engage in religious rituals.

4. Development of resources in the lives of professional women

For all the professional women in my study, having a career was central to their identity. Chapter 7 *Professional Women and the Message of Purpose* therefore examined how the message of potential and purpose helped these women develop the social and cultural capital resources to mediate diverse forms of power more effectively in the work place. The message and mentoring, which both churches provided, seemed to be the key component in the upward mobility of this subgroup within the emerging black middle class. This achieved the fourth and fifth intentions of my research, determining that women's church membership and participation in the formal and informal networks, conferences and training programmes, which comprised the majority of social development projects in these churches, positively affected their identities and material and social practices.

5. Singleness, motherhood and the nuclear family

The fifth aim was not only focused on identity formation and material benefits in the workplace but also on the family and was therefore linked to the final goal which was to study the ideal of motherhood and family within the churches. In chapter 8 *Singleness and the Dream of Marriage* I showed that the ideal of marriage was dominant in both churches and that women who were marrying later found that their participation in these churches kept alive their hope that they too would marry. This chapter filled the gap left by much of the literature on women in Pentecostal-Charismatic churches, which do not engage well with the experiences of single women.

Motherhood and wifely submission were understood in both churches to be the most important roles that any woman could fulfil, and my study engaged with contemporary literature on the subject. In contrast to Latin American studies I showed that there was a masculinization of Christianity rather than a feminization in the rhetoric of both churches, and this appealed to men and women. Chapter 9 *Marriage and the Making of the Nuclear Family* demonstrated that within this paradigm the young women were trying to shape a new understanding of motherhood that did not idealise the heroic strong African mother and negotiated the western cultural contradictions of intense mothering and career demands. They were willing to comply with the ideal of wifely submission as they felt it also meant that their men would have to show respect and support to their nuclear families. White and Rogers (2000: 1048) ask ‘is marriage a form of capital that the well off have used to increase their advantage?’ I showed how it was regarded as a symbol of social success in the churches I studied and that both churches

were helping members enhance their emotional and cultural capital by teaching them what they called ‘biblically based’ parenting skills. The professional women in my study held the nuclear family as their ideal, but they, like other professional women in Africa, found it difficult to find men who earn as much as they did and therefore would/ could marry them (Bledsoe and Pison 1994; Kwagala 1999: 1546) and were marrying later because of the high bride wealth associated with their educated status. This was different from North America where earning potential ‘strongly and positively affected entry into marriage for men but not for women’ (Xie, Raymo et al. 2003: 351).

Interesting issues that were alluded to but not developed

Different points of entry into marriage between African and North American women, and the impact of education and earning on marriage were just two of the many important issues raised by this study but which due to the constraints of my methodology, time, resources and thesis length, I could not engage with in more detail. Within this study I have made some comparison between previously advantaged and disadvantaged women. As the racial dynamics in South Africa have been changing, it would also have been interesting to make a more detailed comparison of these two groups and to explain why in a multi-racial church like His People there were so few multi-racial marriages.

Much of this interracial tension was rooted in the political history of the country. Here I have not focused on the political engagement of these churches because it was not a salient issue for the women I interviewed. They were far more interested in their work and family life than national politics. Both churches were

actively involved in community development programmes, the most notable being the social skills/ soft skills training that they offered. Grace Bible church was directly linked to the police force and civic action groups; and a few members were also prominent figures in the business world. Both churches also had HIV/Aids programmes, orphanages, homeless centres, after school teaching projects and food programmes. My study focused on professional women and therefore the programmes that impacted their lives the most, but to understand the importance and impact of these churches in the larger community it would be necessary to examine this 'welfare' work more thoroughly developing the ideas of (Haddad 1999b, Germond 2001, Koeglenberg 2001 and Cochrane 2006).

A far more detailed analysis of the sermons, music, food, clothes, financial structures and theology of these churches could have been presented in this study but in view of the stringent limitations on length has only been alluded to. Similarly this thesis has not given a detailed analysis of the pastors, their income, status, education and life-style – information which could enrich our understanding of the Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity and its message. Meyer (1998; 2004a) has done interesting work on the media culture and impact of Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches in Ghana, but in the two churches I researched videos, books, music and magazines played a far less important role in the life of the members I met than Meyer's research found. It would be interesting to explore why a similar media industry has not taken off in South Africa.

Important areas for further research

This study has contributed a specific segment to Pentecostal-Charismatic Christian (PCC) research, an area that will hopefully receive more attention in the near future. From this thesis a few avenues for further exploration have come to the fore. The unexpectedly longitudinal nature of my study with His People made it possible for me to interview three women who had left the church during the months that I was ill. These women all said that they found the prescriptive drive towards excellence and 'successful life' too demanding. The church was not able to help them when they applied its teaching without achieving success and most people left because they could no longer live up to the perfectionist character of the institution. For all three female ex-members it was the theology of the church that was profoundly problematic. Longitudinal research that specifically traces the processes through which members depart from these churches and their life experiences after leaving would be an important study. It would also be useful to begin to develop some sort of quantitative measure of these processes.

In the light of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the particular theology of forgiveness that disseminated from this, a comparative study between mainline churches, PCCs and African Independent Churches (AIC) may lead to an illuminating investigation into the relationship between politics and religion - not only in the post-apartheid era but also following the TRC. Such a project could compare the political and civic involvement of these different churches and the particular identities and missions they have, as churches, developed for themselves in the post-apartheid era.

My study briefly touched on the experiences of men in these churches. Little research has been done into the specific life-stories of young previously disadvantaged men in South Africa. A follow-up investigation, which focuses on the place of the church in the life chances and expectations of male members would help to deepen and broaden our understanding of the social changes within the young, upwardly mobile society of contemporary South Africa.

A reader of this thesis could emerge with an over optimistic picture of South Africa in which many of the complexities are smoothed over and poverty seems to be overcome. By concentrating on the realities of professional working women in South Africa this study has not taken into account the high proportion of unemployed and underemployed women and men who attend PCC churches in Gauteng. Why do these people join churches like this? How does their faith impact on their life-chances? And what sort of identity or meaning system are these people shaping? These are equally important questions, which need to be addressed as we continue to appreciate the importance and impact of religion on the changing contours of South African society.

Appendix 1

Table 1 An overview of female interviewees from His People and Grace Bible Church

Details	Previously dis. Women H.P.	Previously dis. Women G.B.	Previously ad. Women H.P.	Students H.P.	Non Prof. Women G.B.	Aver. for Prof. women
No. interview	12	22	7	5	6	41
Average age	31 years	31 years	34 years	20 years	32 years	31 years
Mean earning Aver. earning	R 20 + R 15 – 20 000	R 5 – 10 & R 15 - 20 R 10 – 15 000	R10 – R 15 000 R10 – R 15 000	R 0 R 0	R 0 – 5 000 R 5 – 10 000	R 15 – R 20 000 R 10– R 15 000
Married	25% 3	27% 6	57% 4	0% 0	50% 6	30% 13
Divorced	8% 1	5% 1	0% 0	0% 0	0% 0	5% 2
Single	67% 8	68% 15	43% 3	100% 5	50% 6	60% 26
Had children	42% 5	45% 10	57% 4	0% 0	83% 5	44% 19
Had no children	58% 7	55% 12	43% 3	100% 5	17% 1	51% 22
Qualified with a degree	100% 12	59% 13	86% 6	100% doing degrees 6	0% 0	72% 31
Qualified with a diploma	0% 0	32% 7	14% 1	0% 0	0% 0	19% 8
Lived in the suburbs	83% 10	45% 10	100% 7	0% 0	0% 0	63% 27
Lived in the township	17% 2	55% 12	0% 0	100% 5	100% 6	33% 14
Had dependants other than own children	58% 7	45% 10	0% 0	0% 0	33% 2	40% 17

PAGE

NUMBERING

AS ORIGINAL

Table 2 Men from His People and Grace Bible Church compared with Average of Professional Women from both churches

Details	Aver. for Prof. women	Aver. for Prof Men	Men from His People	Men from Grace Bible
Total number interviewed	41	7	3	4
Average age	31 years	31 years	30 years	32 years
Mean earning	R 15 – R 20 000	R 15 – 20 000	R 15 000	R 20 000
Aver. earning	R 10 – R 15 000	R 10 – 15 000	R 10 – 15 000	R 15 – 20 000
Married	32% 13	57% 4	33% 1	75% 3
Divorced	4% 2	14% 1	0% 0	25% 1
Single	63% 26	29% 2	77% 2	0% 0
Had children	46% 19	14% 1	33% 1	0% 0
Had no children	54% 22	86% 6	77% 2	100% 4
Qualified with a degree	76% 31	86% 6	100% 3	75% 3
Qualified with a diploma	20% 8	14% 1	0% 0	25% 1
Lived in the suburbs	66% 27	57% 4	77% 2	50% 2
Lived in the township	34% 14	43% 3	33% 1	50% 2
Had dependants other than own children	42% 15	43% 3	33% 1	50% 2

Note that the numbers in blue under the % are the actual numbers of respondents.

Table 3 Previously Disadvantaged Women at His People

Name	Age	Marital Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary p/m
1. Rachel	32	Single	0	2 siblings	Suburbs	LLB (Wits) LLM (Columbia)	Legal consultant Proprietor	R 20 000 +
2. Ntabeseng	29	Single	0	Parents and siblings	Suburbs	LLB (Wits)	Legal consultant	R 20 000 +
3. Thembi	26	Single	0	Cousin	Suburbs	BA (UCT)	Client liaison officer	R 5 – R 10 000
4. Jennifer	31	Single	0	Parents	Township	BCom (Wits) CA (Wits)	Financial Analyst	R 20 000 +
5. Carmen	32	Single	0	0	Suburbs	Physiotherapy (Wits)	Physiotherapist Proprietor	R 15 – R 20 000
6. Pam	42	Married	2	0	Suburbs	Orthodontastry (Wits)	Orthodontist	R 20 000 +
7. Julia	34	Single	0	0	Suburbs	BCom (US)	Project Manager	R 20 000 +
8. Norma	32	Single	0	Mother	Suburbs	BSC (Wits)	Corporate consultant	R 15 – R 20 000
9. Grace	26	Single	1	Mother	Township	P.E. Tech	Assistant Pastor	R 5 – R 10 000
10. Lucy	29	Married	1	0	Suburbs	BCom (Wits)	Financial Analyst	R 20 000+
11. Xandi	33	Married	2	Parents	Suburbs	BCom (Wits)	Stay-at-home-mom	0
12. Tswani	28	Divorced	2	0	Suburbs	BA (UWC)	Project manager	R 15 – R 20 000

Table 4 Previously Advantaged Women at His People

Name	Age	Marital Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary
1. Connie	46	Married	4	0	Suburbs	Occupational Therapy (USA)	Senior Pastor Part-time	R 10 – R15 000
2. Rachael	33	Single	0	0	Suburbs	BCom	Pastor & Own Compony	R 15 – R 20 000
3. Lisa	34	Married	2	0	Suburbs	BA (Wits)	Pastor Part-time	R 10 – R 15 000
4. Beverly	30	Married	1	0	Suburbs	C.T. Tech	Proprietor ad. company	R 20 000 +
5. Penny	30	Married	1	0	Suburbs	BCom (UCT)	Stay-at-home-mom	0
6. Janet	33	Single	0	0	Suburbs	BA (Wits)	Journalist	R 15 – R 20 000
7. Kate	34	Single	0	0	Suburbs	BA (UCT)	Free lance journalist	R 10 – R 15 000

Table 5 Students at His People Church

Name	Age	Martial Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary
1. Sarah	21	Single	0	0	Near campus	BA (Wits)	Student	0
2. Moya	21	Single	0	0	Campus	BCom (Wits)	Student	0
3. Marie	20	Single	0	0	Campus	BEng (Wits)	Student	0
4. Ntokaso	20	Single	0	0	Campus	LLB (Wits)	Student	0
5. Tessa	20	Single	0	0	Near campus	BCom	Student	0

Table 6 Men at His People Church

Name	Age	Martial Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary
1. Ian	36	Married	2	0	Suburbs	BCom (Wits) Rhema bible school	Pastor	R 15 – R20 000
2. Themba	28	Single	0	Parents	Suburbs	BCom (Rhodes) H.P. bible school	Pastor	R 10 – R 15 000
3. Peter	27	Single	0	0	Township	BCom (UNW)	Assistant Pastor	R 0–R 5 000

Table 7 Previously Disadvantaged Professional Women at Grace Bible Church

Name	Age	Marital Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary
1. Gail	27	Single	0	0	Township	National diploma	Book keeper	R 5 – R 10 000
2. Onika	39	Divorced	1	Parents	Township	B Tech (Unisa)	Police captain & part-time pastor	R 5 – R 20 000
3. Wonda	42	Married	2	0	Township	BA (Unisa) Banking dip.	Bank accounts manager	R 20 000 +
4. Gege	42	Married	2	0	Township	BA (Mmabatho)	Senior pastor part-time	R 5 – R 10 000
5. Gwen	27	Single	0	0	Township	Public relations diploma J Tech	Client liaison officer	R 5–R 10 000
6. Letty	26	Married	0	0	Suburbs	BA (Unisa)	P.R. project manager	R 10 – R 15 000
7. Tammy	23	Single	0	Mother	Township	Computer dip. J Tech	Sales consultant	R 10 – R 15 000
8. Caro	26	Single	0	Mother	Suburbs	P.R P.E. Tech	Business analyst	R 15 – R 20 000
9. Lerato	32	Single	0	0	Suburbs	C.T. Tech	Cost accountant	R 5 – R 10 000
10. Tumi	32	Married	1	0	Suburbs	BA (UWC)	Human resource manager	R 15 – R 20 000
11. Lesley	38	Married	3	0	Suburbs	BCom (Unisa)	Bank branch manager	R 20 000 +
12. Mamati	35	Single	0	Mother	Suburbs	BA (Unisa)	Human resource manager	R 15 – R 20 0000
13. Belinda	31	Single	1	0	Township	LLB (UNP)	Lawyer	R 10 – R 15 000

14. Gladys	33	Married	2		Parents	Suburbs	LLB (UEC)	Lawyer	R 15 – R 20 000
15. Khanyi	29	Single	1		0	Suburbs	BA social work (UWC)	Social worker	R 5 000 – R 10 000
16. Cindy	24	Single	0		Mother	Township	BA (Unisa) not completed	Events co-ordinator prop.	R 15 – R 20 000
17. Tumi	30	Single	1		0	Township	BA social work (UWC)	Social worker	R 5 – R 10 000
18. Zanele	28	Single	0		Parents	Suburbs	BA (RAU)	Bank branch manager	R 20 000 +
19. Nati	33	Single	2		Mother	Suburbs	MDP (Unisa) MBA (Gibs)	Sales & market director	R 20 000 +
20. Vuyo	29	Single	0		Mother	Township	BA (Wits) did not graduate	Manager municipal dept.	R 10 – R 15 000
21. Mpho	24	Single	0		0	Township	Wits Tech Public Relations	Customer services manager	R 5 – R 10 000
22. Mmachidi	24	Single	0		Mother	Township	Wits BEng	Engineer	R 15 – R 20 000

Table 8 Previously Disadvantaged Non-Professional Women at Grace Bible Church

Name	Age	Marital Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary
1. Miriam	42	Married	2	Parents	Suburbs	Secretarial course	Call centre manager	R 15 - R 20 000
2. Susan	22	Single	0	0	Township	Grade 11	Receptionist	R 0 – R 5 000
3. Thandi	20	Single	1	0	Township	Matric	Unemployed	0
4. Patience	25	Single	1	0	Township	Grade 11	Domestic Assistant	R 0– R 5 000
5. Alice	42	Married	3	Mother	Township	Grade 10	Domestic Assistant	R 0 – R 5 000
6. Carol	38	Married	4	0	Township	Grade 8	Unemployed	0

Table 9 Men from Grace Bible Church

Name	Age	Martial Status	Children	Dependants	Home	Education	Work	Salary
1. David	34	Divorced	0	Parents	Suburbs	B Eng (Wits)	Engineer	R 20 000 +
2. Graham	30	Single	0	0	Township	B Com (UWC)	Retail manager	R 15 – R 20 000
3. Steven	32	Single	0	0	Township	B Eng (P.E. Tech)	Engineer	R 15 – R 20 000
4. Peter	31	Single	0	Mother	Suburbs	BA (Wits)	Market Research	R 20 000 +

Appendix 2

Professional Women in South Africa

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study.
This is a confidential study and your anonymity will be respected at all times.

Where do you currently live?

Where did you grow up?

With whom did you live while you were growing up?

Do your parents live together?

Did they live together while you were growing up?

Where did you matriculate?

Where did you do your tertiary studies?

What did you study?

How were your studies funded?

How old are you?

Are you married, single, widowed or divorced?

Do you have a child or children? If you do have a child or children how old are they?

What type of work do you do?

Please tick the income bracket that you fall into

R 0.00 – R 5 000.00	gross monthly salary	
R 5 001.00 – R 10 000.00	gross monthly salary	
R 10 001.00 – R 20 000.00	gross monthly salary	
+ R 20 000.00	gross monthly salary	

When did you first start coming to His People/ Grace Bible Church?

What made you start coming to His People/ Grace Bible Church?

What ministry(ies) are you involved in at His People/ Grace Bible Church?

Please feel free to ask me questions at any time during the interview process.
Thank you for your help.
Maria.

Questions about Women as Christians

1. How do you think men see women in your church?
2. Do women feel positive or negative about patriarchy in their home's/church?
3. What do you think are the most difficult aspects of Christianity for women?
4. What do you think is the ideal Christian woman?
5. How easy or difficult is it for you to be this woman?
6. Do you think different things are expected of men and women in the church?
7. How do you feel about male – headed households?
8. What do you expect or want from your husband?
9. What does the church teach about marriage?
10. What does it mean to be a good father?
11. What is the role of the husband in the family?
12. Do men fulfil these roles/duties?
13. Is there a difference between His People (HP)/Grace Bible (GB) men and men generally?
14. What is the role of the mother?
15. What does it mean to be a good mother?
16. Who are your role models in the church?
17. Who are your female role models in the church?
18. Do you find HP/GB male or female centred?
19. Would it be helpful if you had more female preachers?
20. Are there things that are easier for women to do/be as Christians than for men?
21. How does HP/GB enrich your life as a woman?
22. What is expected of you as a Christian woman?
23. How has your family life changed since you became a Christian?
24. What relationship do you have to your extended family?
25. Who does the housework at home?
26. Who cares for the children?
27. Who deals with the finances?

28. What are the things about church that you find difficult to deal with?

Identity Questions

1. How would you describe yourself?
2. What does it mean to be African?
3. What do you feel about township culture?
4. What are your favourite magazines and TV programmes? And why?
5. Are you comfortable with the current youth culture?
6. How would you describe the current youth culture?
7. Would you provide sexual favours for material goods?
8. What are the aspects of the church you most relate to?
9. How have you changed since you became a Christian?
10. What are the key things that make you who you are?
11. What things in your life are most important to you?
12. Can you tell me more about your family?
13. Do you see everything becoming one global culture?
14. What do you think about African culture?
15. What does it mean to be an African woman?
16. What does your family expect of you in cultural terms?
17. What do you feel about *lobola*?
18. Is African culture liberating/ restrictive or both?
19. How do you spend your free time?

Aids Questions

1. Why do you think we have an Aids problem?
2. How do you feel we can solve this problem?
3. What are you doing or have you done to stop Aids or help people with HIV/Aids?
4. How many of your friends or family do you think could be affected with HIV/Aids?
5. Does the *Love Life* campaign work?
6. What is your church doing about Aids?
7. Does your church preach or teach about Aids?
8. Would you feel strange being with someone from HP/GB in relationship to Aids?

Development Questions

1. Why did you join HP/GB?
2. What aspects of the church have really helped you develop yourself?
3. What about your church is most important for you?
4. Can you tell me more about the Business Network and how it impacts your life, or does not impact you?
5. Do you have a mentor from the church who helps you with work, your walk with God and your family life?
6. Are you involved in any of the church development or caring projects?
7. What is the church doing to alleviate poverty?
8. What is the church doing to empower people?
9. How have you been affected by poverty or disempowerment?

Work related Questions

1. What sort of work do you do?
2. How long have you been working?
3. Do you enjoy your work?
4. Where did you study?
5. Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
6. What are your ultimate goals?
7. How do you balance your work and Christian life?
8. How do you balance your work and family life?
9. Do you have dependants?
10. What is your attitude to your work? Does this differ from non-Christians or men?
11. Why do you work?
12. How does your age, gender or race affect your situation at work?
13. Have you recently been looked over for a promotion? And why?
14. What are the most difficult aspects of your job?
15. What do you most like about your work?
16. What have or had you not been prepared for in work?
17. How do men see or relate to women at work?
18. What is the racial mix in your company?
19. Is there a female/racial glass ceiling in your work?

African Questions

1. Can you explain African funerals to me?
2. How does HP/GB respond to this?
3. Is HP/GB African enough?
4. Does the church represent you?
5. Can you explain ancestor veneration to me?
6. How does your church respond to this?
7. What do you feel about ancestor veneration and your church's teaching about it?
8. Do many people have problems with ancestors or *sangomas*?

9. Do you think there has been a redefining of what it means to be coloured/black/white in SA?
10. Have you or do you go to a *sangoma*?
11. Are you part of a Stokvel? (A group of people who come together to save money. The members can then draw on the money in times of need)
12. What do you think of *sangomas*?
13. Do women have more power or leadership in African Traditional Religions than in Christianity?

Questions around Faith and God

1. How do you see God?
2. What was your image of God as a child?
3. What was your image of God as a teenager?
4. How has that image changed?
5. Why do you think your image of God has changed?
6. When do you pray and why do you pray?
7. In what language(s) do you pray?
8. What is the language(s) of your Bible(s)?
9. How do you think women are dealt with in the Bible?
10. How do you understand or interpret the Bible?
11. Why is your faith important to you?

Questions for Leaders

1. Women's entrepreneurial programme –
 - What did you concentrate on?
 - What are the common needs that women voice?
 - How are women different from men?
2. Mentoring –
 - What are the general needs that women voice?
 - What are the most important issues for women?
 - How are these different across cultures?
3. What links do you have with government and business
 - Are official these links official.
4. How do you feel about secular culture?
 - Advertising?
 - Ancestor worship?
5. What is happening around the following issues?
 - Disempowerment
 - Church developing and maturing
 - The church's theology.

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